SALADIN

Prince of Chivalry

CHARLES J. ROSEBAULT

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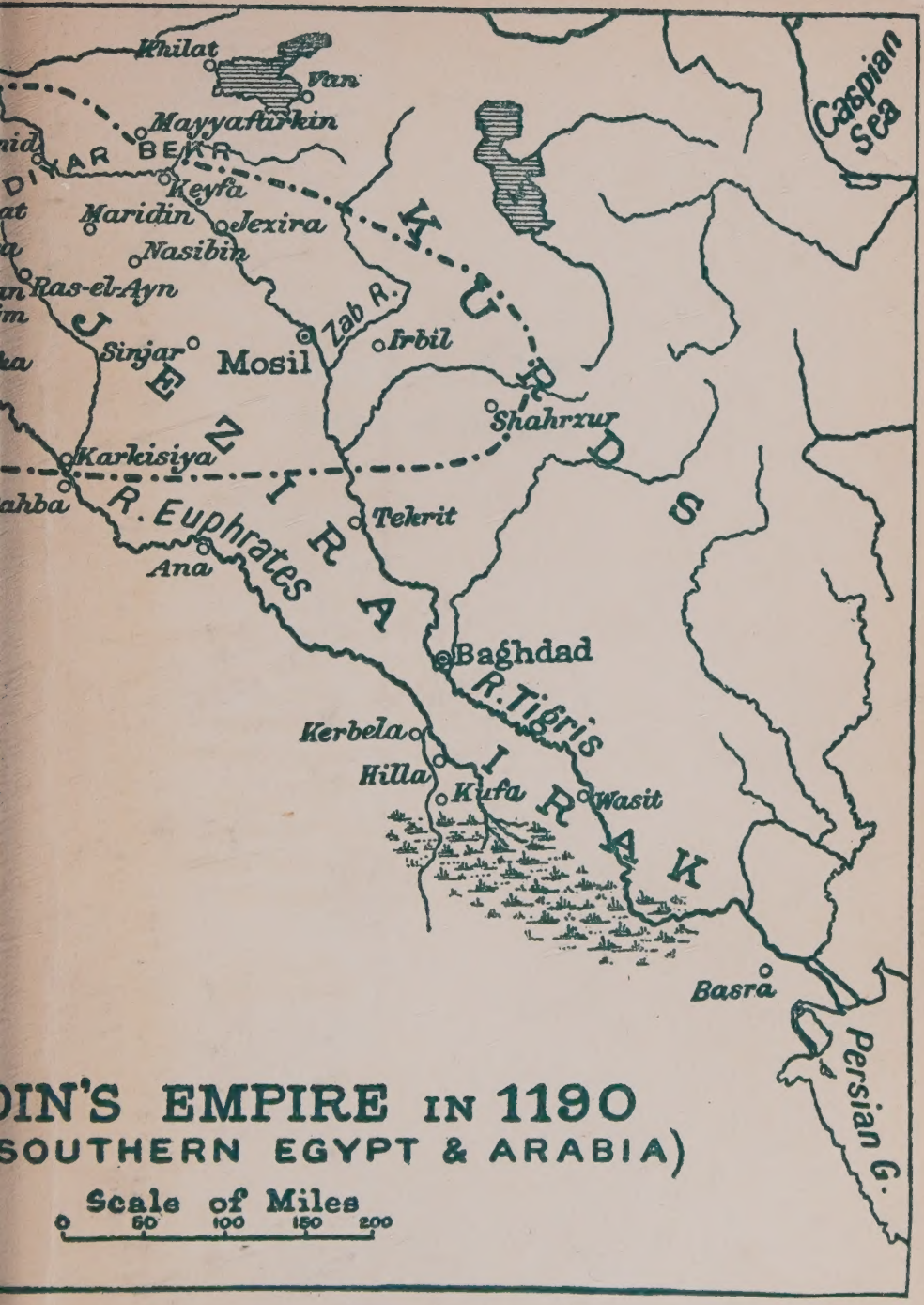

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SALADIN, THE VICTORIOUS

SALADIN

Prince of Chivalry

By

Charles J. Rosebault

Illustrated

NEW YORK
ROBERT M. MCBRIDE & COMPANY
MCMXXX

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First Published, February, 1930

SALADIN — PRINCE OF CHIVALRY
PRINTED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

132083

TO LAURA D.

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FOREWORD

By every theory of inheritance and environment Saladin the Kurd should have been ruthless, rapacious, indifferent to the rights of others, a type of the arrogant despot controlled by his own selfish desires. The people from whom he sprang were a wild lot, fighters, robbers and contemptuous of the advancement in civilization shown by their less primitive neighbors. The right of the strongest sword was incontestable in their eyes, and no other right received consideration. Truculently they invaded the lands of the Armenians and the Persians and possessed themselves of whatever they found worth the taking. By turns shepherds and bandits, as conditions favored, subsisting simply, indifferent to the comforts craved by weaker humanity. Here certainly was not a hothouse for the propagating of gallantry and courtesy and the grand manner. Nor for the growth of those virtues, always rare but never more so than in the semi-barbarous mediaeval period, of forbearance, kindliness and the spirit of mercy.

Yet all the evidence agrees, and none cries so loudly as that of his opponents, that Saladin was all these. A cavalier at all times, as perfect in manner as in per-

formance; magnificently generous and superbly courteous, as though he had indeed been born to the purple.

It is because of these qualities he has remained one of the outstandingly romantic figures of history. Not, it is true, to pious Moslems. To them his achievements in restoring to Islam control of the Holy Land make him sacrosanct, the chosen instrument of Allah and His Prophet, only incidentally a human being and therefore not to be gossiped about as if he were as other men. A savior of his people must always abide in a chilly atmosphere. Witness our own George Washington.

But, for the outside world it is not the mighty sultan nor the valiant warrior that has inspired the poet and the weaver of romantic tales. The records of Islam teem with examples of the former, and the whole world of the Twelfth Century was overrun with varying types of the latter. The number of doughty sword-swingers who were traversing the earth at that time, seeking adventure and a worthwhile opponent, must have been enormous. The bulkiest Who's-Who of our day would look slim beside the roster of belligerent heroes when breaking heads in the name of God, or one's fair lady, was both a vocation and a pastime. Hence, prowess as a mere fighter gave no claim to entry to the halls of fame, nor to the consideration of posterity. The aspirant for immortality, then as now, must have some unique quality.

Extraordinary, almost beyond comprehension is the character which Saladin reveals as we search through

the records of friend and foe. This unrelenting enemy of Christianity, who waded unmoved through the blood of thousands of the soldiers of the Cross, is shown by the testimony of his bitterest foes to have been the most consistent supporter of the ideals advanced by the Founder of Christianity. As good a knight as any who took the vows before priest or bishop. An unswerving champion of the loftiest principles of chivalry.

SALADIN

Prince of Chivalry

CHAPTER ONE

THE KNIGHTING OF SALADIN

In the year 1167 two men of consequence met in the camp of King Amalric of Jerusalem, outside of Alexandria. One was the Christian knight, Humphrey of Toron. The other was Saladin, son of Ayub, ruler of Damascus, and at the moment lieutenant to his Uncle Shirkuh, commander of the Turcoman soldiers opposed to the Christians. For seventy-five days Saladin had been holding Alexandria against the assaults of Amalric, but now a truce had been arranged, and it was as the guest of the King he had come into the Christian camp.

He was not yet thirty, Humphrey somewhat older. Unlike most of his companions in arms, the latter was acquainted with the speech and the customs of the people represented by the visitor, and had been on terms of friendship with some of them. The amenities of the occasion called for a show of courtesy on his part, and this was returned with such good will by his guest that

what had been but politeness a moment before became, after a brief acquaintance, a sympathetic accord. After all, there was much in common between these enemies through circumstance.

Above all, a mutual readiness to recognize the qualities which superior men ever admire — valor, intelligence, physical fitness, efficiency. Saladin had just shown his mettle, he an almost untried warrior, by withstanding with only a small supporting force the assaults of a powerful army. As for Humphrey, second of his name, he had proved himself worthy of his inherited rank, on many a field of battle.

There was much to impress the Moslem visitor in this intimate view of the noble knights of Christendom. Big men and powerful, the fame of whose mighty deeds had become a legend throughout the East. In their suits of heavy armor they had stood single-handed many a time against a score of fierce assailants, wielding their heavy swords and cumbersome lances as though these were light as reeds. Their haughty bearing, evidence of self-confidence, was possible only to exceptional men — as they must be indeed to have attained the honor of knighthood, which came only to the elect. That much the Moslem knew, and the moment was propitious to gratify his curiosity to know more. So he begged his new-found friend to acquaint him with the principles upon which this renowned organization was founded, and the manner in which knighthood was acquired.

Humphrey was willing enough to give the informa-

tion. A solemn and complicated ceremony, he explained, usually accompanied the induction of the candidate for knightly honors, all of which had a symbolic significance. The aspirant must be purified and come in a proper spirit of humility; for pride was a blemish and no true knight could forget that the end of all flesh was death, nor that pomp and power were but transitory things of no avail in the world to come. Step by step through the elaborate proceedings, each detail significant of the duties the knight vowed to perform throughout life for the service and honor of God and holy church, as also in defense of the weak and the protection of the virtuous, Saladin followed his host, his deep interest attested by exclamatory interjections, such as: "By God, this is most beautiful!" and "All this is good to hear."

With such enthusiasm for its fundamentals, and with the glow of sympathy inspired by their new-found friendship, what was more natural than that the pupil should ask and the instructor grant initiation into the order? To be sure, they would fight each other on the morrow, and, to be sure, here was a Moslem, which meant to every Christian, however lenient and broad-minded, an infidel, who must inevitably descend into the torments of hell-fire, did he not repent of his unholy faith, and embrace the true one. Moreover, the very foundation of knighthood was support of Mother Church. Just how the gallant Humphrey avoided this delicate problem is a matter of conjecture, but it is perhaps not going too far afield to suggest that he might

have been inspired to believe that by taking the vows of knighthood this ardent and high-born Saracen might possibly be brought to a much-hoped-for conversion.

And how about this Moslem, Salah ed-din, whose very name was a proclamation of his religious allegiance, meaning Prosperity of the World and *The Faith?* Had he forgotten the teachings of the holy men and his inheritance of the wisdom of the Prophet? Was his ambition to be the sword of the True Faith, and the scourge of its enemies, forgotten in this impulsive admiration for an idealized Chivalry and its no less idealized supporters? Most unlikely. Never for a moment throughout his career was there a single indication of faltering.

But, for him the fundamentals of Knighthood, as he had just heard them expressed, lay not in the devotion to Church or to Christianity, but in the three principal duties of the knight — to uphold the right and never take part in injustice; never to deceive matron or maid, but ever to be their champion in time of need; to repress within himself the call of the flesh by fasting and self-denial. The fourth, attendance at mass, was for those who had not the enlightenment of the Prophet to guide them; in his case it would mean scrupulous observance of the hours of prayer, as ordained by holy Koran and the Traditions of the Prophet.

Is all this true and supported by historical evidence? Not a word of it appears in the writings of the Mohammedan chroniclers. Possibly, after reflection, the

young man thought it just as well not to mention it in the parental home, or to the hot-headed uncle under whose command he then was. Youth, the world over and in all times, realizes now and then that the older generation has its prejudices which preclude both reason and argument, and that on occasion it is better to let sleeping dogs lie undisturbed.

But the Christian writers have made much of it. Not only in poetry and romance, but in serious records of events. Sometimes the ceremony has been affirmed, but the manner of it varied. Geoffrey de Vinsauf, a Crusader of a later period, wrote:

"In process of time, when his years were matured and he was fit for military service, he came to Enfrid of Tours, the illustrious prince of Palestine, to be mantled, and after the manner of the Franks received from him the belt of knighthood."

Much later, when his career was drawing to a close, he gave his approval to the knighting of his brother's son, a performance conducted with much ceremony before the whole Christian army by no less a person than Richard the Lion-Hearted. So, whether we accept the evidence as to his receiving the accolade himself or not, we know he approved of the ideas underlying the order of knighthood. Indeed, as the record of his life unrolls itself before our eyes, its outstanding characteristic is the tenacity with which he clings to those principles of chivalry which were outlined to him by Sir Humphrey.

Often enough came moments when the temptation

to deviate must have been strong and almost insurmountable. Time and again these were due to failure on the part of his opponents to observe the vows which they had taken so solemnly, but were not always so scrupulous to uphold. But, though the sworn knights of Christendom sometimes failed to stand by their given word, and the pledge of unselfishness was forgotten under the prod of ambition, the records show unswerving adherence to his vows on the part of this Moslem. And these are the records of the enemy. With hardly an exception the contemporary Christian chroniclers, though they may rail at Saladin, the Moslem and infidel, testify to his unbroken word, his unfailing courtesy, his mercifulness and his generosity.

There had been many great Sultans before him, monarchs to whom might be applied the sub-titles of the Wise, the Magnificent, the Valiant. It remained for Saladin to win that of the Chivalrous. To him the unfortunate Christian captive addressed his last appeal, confident of securing justice, and hopeful of mercy. It was to him the weeping widow and orphan came for succor, never to be turned away empty-handed. On his generosity the vanquished enemy relied for terms he would never have granted himself. Extravagant in largesse to the extreme of imprudence, a spendthrift in beneficence, yet of the utmost simplicity in his own manner of living, he died impoverished. Little of the autocrat connoted for most of us by the word Sultan in the record of this life. Almost foolishly lenient and forbearing, in fact. By consequence, a gallant

hero in the esteem of all nations and all races, the admired of enthusiastic essayists, poets and weavers of romance throughout the civilized world. For many of them a very Prince of Chivalry.

The knightly ages, says an authority, will always enjoy the glory of having formulated a code of honor which aimed at rendering the upper classes worthy of their exceptional privileges. Chivalry, says another, taught the world the duty of noble services well rendered. It upheld courage and enterprise in obedience to rule, it consecrated military prowess to the service of the Church, glorified the virtues of liberality, good faith, unselfishness and courtesy.

And here was a devout Moslem — devout indeed to the point of fanaticism — supporting his claim to premiership in that noble course of conduct devised by Christian minds for exalted servants of the Christian church.

CHAPTER TWO

GOD WISHES!

It was a picturesque though dreadful time. From across the seas and over the mountains there had come into Asia Minor vast hordes of men driven by an ideal more potent than any incitement of ambition or lure of wealth. God, *their* God, had sent them forth from their homes. Years before, in the great Council at Clermont-en-Auvergne, where Urban the Second and Peter the Hermit had passed on the word, He had told them to go, to rescue from profanation His holy places, and the vast multitude of listeners, recognizing the validity of the message, and its perfect justification, had responded as one man. "God wishes it!" had burst spontaneously from the thousands of throats at the close of the Pope's exhortation, and miraculously, that inspired utterance had passed, almost as though our modern radio had been anticipated in the days when the wonders of electricity were not yet dreamed of, to far distant lands.

At the meeting places of the lowly, whether church or tavern, men were suddenly lifted out of themselves by a mysterious compelling call to higher things. So, too, in the palaces and castles of the mighty, drinking

bouts and the customary concern with wars, gambling and the chase were forgotten in this interest in a new and different kind of enterprise.

Given the right impulse, at the right moment, nothing is easier than to convert a mass of men into potential heroes, and the inspiration was at hand. Abandoning hearth and home, the bench and the ploughshare, castle as well as cottage, ease as readily as penury, vast aggregations of men — and not a few women — issued forth into an unknown world bristling with many perils. Never before nor since has there been such a spontaneous and wholesale plunge into wild adventure.

A French writer of the Eighteenth Century, moved perhaps by the polite cynicism of his time, asserted that different motives inspired these original soldiers of the Red Cross (the Crusader wore a red cross on his right shoulder), and proceeded to attribute far from altruistic impulses to the most of them. "The leaders looked for glory and lands, the bishops for increased attention and deference, the common people for liberty and plunder, the monks to violate without sin their vows to God because of their new vows to rescue the Cross. Some simple souls were sincerely animated with the desire to deliver the Holy Land." This is to ignore the existing conditions, which made it quite possible and even logical for self-seeking and even worse vices to cling like barnacles to unquestioning faith and devotion. It will not do to view the conscience of the Dark Ages through the magnifying

lenses of more enlightened times and apply the critical standards of a period when the conditions of life gave less excuse for lapses from high morality.

It was a time when most men lived like dogs in their kennels and addressed their hopes of better things to the future life. A time when faith in God was for the great majority the only thing that made life on this earth bearable. Even the ruffian, who cut a purse or a throat indifferently at the crossroads, could weep at the recital of the sufferings of the saints, and bend his knee devoutly as he passed, still clutching his ill-gotten gains, the effigy of the Savior. Men must eat — and drink, too — and human flesh was admittedly weak and sinful, but in the end sin would be washed away in the tears of repentance. At the foot of the gallows the footpad confessed, was shriven and hoped for ultimate salvation.

If the vicious and degraded held to faith in God and His works, how much more the average, who were only subject to minor failings! And if now the stirrings of selfish ambition were aroused by the trumpet's call to the army of the Lord, it was after all the inspiration of a higher duty which smothered the whisperings of prudence and rendered them indifferent to the known dangers of the undertaking.

Of the hundreds of thousands who started upon this seemingly quixotic challenge of fate there may well have been many to whom the hope of plunder was a strong and possibly a predominating motive, but even for these the quest of fortune was elevated above the

sordid by the conviction that the despoiling of the unbelievers was sanctified and made pure in the eyes of God. The birthplace and the tomb of Christ were to be rescued and, in the glory of that accomplishment, the acquisition of a little land and property, the lining of one's purse, became only incidental.

No doubt then that the fires of idealism burned white hot in the Europe of that day, and the conflagration rolled on with none to stay it, though it left abandoned homes and disordered communities behind it. Bishops forgot their dioceses, priests their churches, monks their cells, laborers their benches and farms, merchants their commerce. There were deserted husbands as well as deserted wives.

In hordes they marched out from a far from merry England, from Scotland and Ireland, from France and Italy, with radiant faces and beaming eyes, oblivious of hardship as of danger. Buoyant and intrepid, these adventurers in the name of God plunged into trackless forests, crossed stormy seas, climbed forbidding mountains. Suffering unbelievable hardships, enduring the torments of burning sun and freezing wind, of starvation and of thirst, they emerged finally in the Promised Land and went eagerly into battle against a valiant and often overwhelming foe, to meet death undaunted and be thrust into nameless graves.

In the meantime rumors of the coming avalanche had penetrated the Holy Land and the adjacent provinces. And, if there was dismay at the tidings, there was also indignant wrath and hot determination to

wreak vengeance on these presumptuous, unbelieving dogs, who denied Mahomet and obstinately pursued the idolatry of the Cross; infidels who knew not that God was One, alone and indivisible, and that Jesus, though inspired of prophecy, was not God. What more glorious than to punish these mad ones, to resist them to the death, when death meant Paradise and the eternity of joys impossible on earth!

So here was one idealistic movement meeting and being opposed by another. Each feeling itself inspired by God, and each secure in the righteousness of its cause, the purity of its motives, the certainty of its reward. Many times since then, in the limping march of civilization, have men faced each other in the same spirit of fury, of eagerness to maim, torture and kill, inspired by the same conviction of justification on either side, and such happenings are not so remote that we cannot appreciate the madness which makes them possible, but the Crusades stand apart in the intensity and the duration of the emotionalism aroused on both sides.

That there were many lapses from just behavior on the part of the Crusaders must be admitted. Also, that repeatedly the flesh-pots of the Egyptians proved more seductive than service of the Lord. Under errant guidance the rank and file are led into massacres of the innocent and to plunder and rapine. Hospitality along the line of march is repaid by robbery and incendiarism. Fellow Christians are the victims, as well as those eternal scapegoats, the Jews. At Cologne

even the protection of the Archbishop did not save these from the mob led by Count Emicho, which burst in the doors of the archiepiscopal residence and massacred men, women and children. The Christian inhabitants of a village near Ancyra, coming out to welcome the invaders, with the Cross at the head of the procession, are ruthlessly pillaged. The subjects of the Emperor of Constantinople are robbed and maltreated at the very time he is providing food and shelter, and the King of Hungary has to fight to keep control of his cities. But, it must always be remembered that here were vast hordes of the ignorant aroused to hysteria, seeking hungrily for sign or portent which should indicate the anticipated intervention and guidance of the Lord, ready instruments of the first madman or scoundrel who produced the spark to set this inflammable tinder into roaring flame. It is not the evil-minded alone who make the martyrdom of man.

Whatever God may really have wished has not been made known to this day, but we do know there were many ups and downs in the fierce struggle of the two contenders for the glory of expressing the Divine will. Five different armies started from Europe at different times in the year 1096, four led by knights of valor and consequence, — Godfrey of Bouillon, Duke of Lorraine; Bohemond, son of the Duke of Apulia and Calabria; Raymond, Duke of Narbonne, and Robert of Normandy, son of William the Conqueror. The first to reach Asia Minor, a ragged, broken mob, was

led by Walter the Penniless and Peter the Hermit, the latter being credited with having induced Pope Urban to start the movement.

Peter and Walter were practically eliminated almost at once, but the others succeeded after many hardships in capturing a number of cities of consequence and finally Jerusalem itself. Many sordid incidents, born of jealousies and rival ambitions, marred the arrival at this goal, but there were also many exhibitions of heroic endurance and many doughty deeds to balance the record.

At the siege of Antioch Robert of Normandy split the head of his Saracen opponent to the very shoulders with a single stroke of his mighty broad sword, whereat Godfrey of Bouillon, not to be outdone, engaged with a giant among the enemy. The Saracen's first blow shivered the shield of Godfrey, whereupon he rose in his stirrups and " calmly cut his adversary in two across the middle with a single stroke, so that the upper half of the man fell to the ground, leaving the lower half still sitting on the horse." Please note the " calmly." Probably your knight of chivalry must not be expected to do things with the vulgar impetuosity or exposure of effort which might be well enough in a mere man-at-arms.

Antioch fell after a long siege and then only through the treachery of a citizen, an Armenian emir named Feirus, and the Crusaders punished the long resistance by a wholesale slaughter of the citizens, six thousand dying by the sword in a single night.

But a mighty army of Saracens came up and besieged the Crusaders in turn, and the latter were put to it to withstand the hardships to which they were subjected. Many of the leaders deserted, and it looked as though a débacle was inevitable, but, at the crucial moment, as happened frequently with these hard-bitten warriors, they sallied out to fight against overwhelming odds and routed the enemy. It seemed hardly less than a miracle and, in fact, it was the discovery of the Holy Lance, with which the Roman soldier had pierced the side of Christ, which overcame the overwhelming odds against the Crusaders. That and the sudden appearance of a host of ghostly soldiers on white horses, bearing white banners, undoubtedly evoked by the presence of the Lance.

Strangely enough, there were doubters among the Crusaders even then, men of so little faith that they would not believe Peter Bartholomew's report of the vision which had led him to the finding of the Lance, nor subsequent visions equally marvelous and moving. And, when Peter passed through the ordeal of fire, in the presence of forty thousand Crusaders, even then some remained unconvinced. Of course, when Peter died a few days later these unbelievers laid his death to his burns, and refused to listen to those who insisted he had been the victim of the enthusiasts who had grabbed him when he issued from the flames to carry him off in triumph, mauling him severely in their zeal.

Somewhat over a month later — the date cannot

be fixed with certainty, but was probably the close of May, 1099 — they were on their way to Jerusalem along the coast, taking some of the towns and cities on the way. Of the hundreds of thousands who had started on the long and often tragic wanderings — the estimates run all the way from one hundred and fifty thousand to six hundred thousand — there were now fifty thousand left, including some fifteen hundred knights.

June 6th they got their first glimpse of the walls and towers of the Holy City. Never before nor since, in the history of the world, say the chroniclers, was witnessed such a scene of mass emotion. Forgotten were the bickerings, the rivalries, the lust for earthly things. Strong, stalwart men, who had endured unbelievable sufferings and privations unaffected, who had fought and killed and maimed unmoved, sobbed aloud, sank on their knees and kissed the earth in ecstasy of rejoicing. As at the beginning so now, with their goal in sight, their hearts and minds were concentrated on a devotional ideal. Alas, the flesh was not strong enough for them to remain at this elevation long.

Jerusalem, holy city of three great religions, replete with sacred memories for Jews, Moslems and Christians, has seen much spilling of human blood and much human anguish, and probably never more than on the day — July 15th is the accepted date — when the valiant soldiers of Christendom forced the defenses and streamed into its historic streets. Forgotten was the spirit of Christ in the lust for blood. The

Moslems had mocked the Crusaders in their fancied security, beating before their eyes the Holy Crucifix, the Cross believed to be the very one on which Christ had shed his blood for the redemption of mankind, crying out in taunting accents, "Franks, it is the blessed Cross;" and now they must pay for the sacrilege. Women and maidens were ravished; the thirsting swords drank their fill.

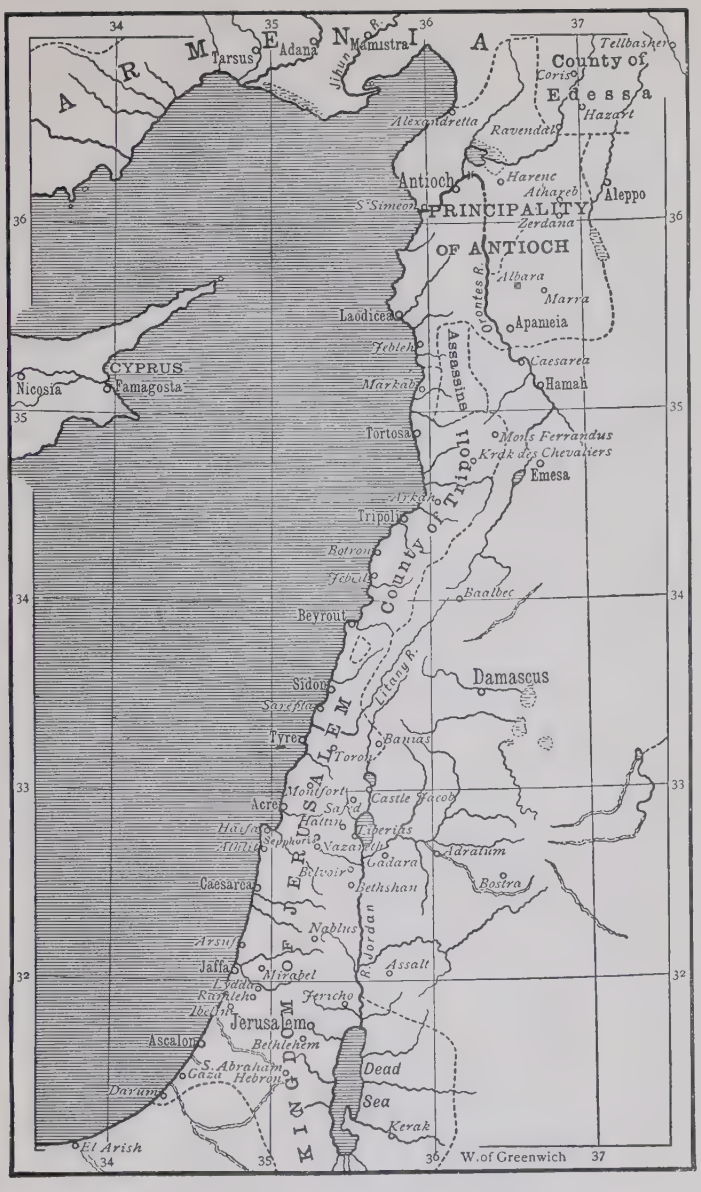
Through the streets ran the defeated, vainly seeking sanctuary. Some, wrote an eye witness, "were reft of their heads, while others, riddled through with arrows, were forced to leap down the towers. Others, after long torture, were burnt in the flames. In all the streets and squares there were to be seen piles of heads and hands and feet, and along the public ways foot and horse alike made passage over the bodies of the dead."

A few of the leaders showed some compassion. Tancred of Sicily, after possessing himself of the golden hangings in the Temple, offered to protect those who sought sanctuary there, though he was unable to maintain his promise. Raymond actually saved those who reached the Tower of David. But the slaughter continued until arms were too weary to ply the sword and the dagger longer. And the next day the killing and the torture were resumed. "Such a slaughter of pagan folk had never been seen or heard of," wrote a chronicler. "None knows their number save God alone."

Between these two periods of slaughter there had

been thought for the higher purpose of the Crusade. Godfrey, withdrawing from the carnage, was the first to lead the way to the Church of the Resurrection. He went barefooted, clad simply in a clean linen garment, to the sepulcher of Christ. Presently all followed. Weapons and bloody garments were laid aside. Also barefooted, and with heads uncovered, they marched, weeping tears of joy, praying and singing songs of penitence.

Five hundred years later a body of soldiers fresh from battle invaded the atelier of Michelangelo, curious to see the man who was building St. Peter's and making pictures and statues for the palace of the Pope. From there they went to mass, with the eyes, ears and noses of their slain enemies still sticking to the points of their spears. It has taken a long time to restrain the blood lust of the victor.



THE HOLY LAND IN THE TWELFTH CENTURY

CHAPTER THREE

IN AND AROUND THE HOLY LAND

THE LANDS taken by the Crusaders are described by Mukaddasi, an Arab traveler, as containing many beauty spots, " red, white and black, which are the fields and gardens, held to resemble the moles on a beauty's face." He divided them into four zones, the first bordering the Mediterranean, a plain with sandy tracts following one another and alternating with the cultivated land. Here were the cities of the sea coast. The second zone was mountainous and heavily wooded, possessing many springs, with frequent villages and cultivated fields. The cities here included Jerusalem and Antioch. The third zone included the valley of the Jordan, with many villages and streams, well-cultivated fields and indigo plantations. Here were Jericho and Tiberias. The fourth zone bordered on the Desert. It had mountains high and bleak, but also many villages with springs of water and forest trees. In this zone were included the important cities of Damascus and Aleppo. The climate was temperate except in that portion which lies in the center, between Mt. Seir and the Waters of Merom. This was the hot country, where grew the indigo tree, the banana and the palm.

"Now Syria," continues Mukaddasi, "is a land of blessing, a country of cheapness, abounding in fruits, and peopled by holy men. The upper province, which is near the dominions of the Greeks, is rich in streams and crops, and the climate of it is cold. And the lower province is even more excellent, and pleasanter, by reason of the lusciousness of its fruits and in the great number of its palm trees." Within the province of Palestine he listed thirty-six products not to be found thus united in any other land. "There is matter of comfort both for this world and the next," he concludes, "for here the heart softens and men's limbs incline to the attitude of prayer."

Before the Crusades these lands had passed through many vicissitudes. The successors of Mahomet had ruled over a vast territory subjugated by the irresistible soldiers of Islam, and at one time the power of the Caliph extended over Egypt, Persia, Syria and into North Africa and Spain. When his temporal power began to wane, beginning in the Ninth Century and progressing to impotency by the close of the Tenth, a number of small kingdoms controlled by native Arabs came to the fore, but at the beginning of the Eleventh a new and potent force swept over all, conquering Persia, Mesopotamia, Syria and Palestine. Wild tribes from Turkestan, descendants of Seljuk, chief of the Turkish tribe of Ghuzz, fell like the wind of wrath upon the decadent inhabitants and were accepted as conquerors with but little opposition. They had already adopted the faith of the conquered and

breathed into it a new fervor. Soon the whole of Asia, from the western frontier of Afghanistan to the Mediterranean, acknowledged their rule.

Once firmly established the Seljuk Sultans took on the polish and refinements of their environment. Being virgin soil, their appetite for aesthetic improvement grew on what was fed to it, and presently they were reaching out for the means of advancement, so that when Malek Shah came along, in 1072, Mohammedan Asia came under the dominion of a ruler whose understanding and sense of responsibility have rarely been equalled. A government far superior to anything obtaining in Europe at that time or even much later was developed under the administration of this humane and enlightened ruler.

His was an absolute control. Never was the doctrine of the divine right of kings upheld more stoutly. But with this untrammelled power went an equally unequivocal theory of responsibility to the governed. The subject was admittedly entitled to the constant care and consideration of his monarch. No indulgence of selfish desires, inclinations or whims by this overlord. His the obligations of the Spartan, ever mindful of his duties, using privilege only to attain superior service. At Malek Shah's bidding his vizier, Nizam ul Mulk, who was in no small measure responsible for the Sultan's high ideals, wrote a treatise on the principles of government, in which was set down, black on white, for every man to read, those superior conceptions of the duties of rulers which were to guide his master,

and which have been the marvel of the world ever since.

No chance for the mildest of voluptuaries in these rigid requirements. Little enough of attraction in the king business for the average man, seeking a little fun by the wayside. Nizam ul Mulk's sovereign must be almost superhuman, sloughing the failings of common clay. Not for him the weaknesses of anger, hatred, envy, pride, greed, avarice, malice, lust, selfishness, impulsiveness, lying, ingratitude or frivolity, but he must train himself to the ways of modesty, gentleness, humility, patience, pity and control of temper. He must be clement, grateful, generous and staunch, and have both love of knowledge and justice. The marvel is that he seems to have attained more nearly to this standard of the angels than would seem humanly possible. Unquestionably his example was in the mind of Saladin when he came into power.

The list of the definite duties laid down by Malek Shah's stern prime minister called for the exercise of many of the virtues listed above. Twice a week he must sit in audience and receive all comers, and give due heed to their wants and grievances. The right of petition must be open to the meanest subject, and there must be no go-betweens. Whether he be of the great unwashed or redolent of myrrh and frankincense, the monarch must give him his personal attention, listening patiently and rendering his decision only after full consideration. One weighty judgment, said the vizier, is of more service to a king than a mighty army.

To emphasize the importance of his admonition Nizam ul Mulk recited the experiences of other monarchs anxious to fulfil their obligations. Aware of the tendency of underlings to intervene between the humble and their superiors, one ruler directed all who had petitions to present to come to him robed in red, so that he might be able to distinguish them even in a throng. Another sat on horseback in the middle of a large plain, where he could see all who approached and be able to perceive any attempt to intercept them. Finally there was a prince of Bokhara who was so driven by his conscience that he waited up all one night in a heavy snow storm in the great square of his city for the chance petitioner who might have been turned away in the daytime by some over-zealous servant.

Equally solemn are the warnings against the danger of oppression by officials, from governors of provinces down to the guardians at the palace gates, and elaborate means for its detection are set forth. Spies disguised as traveling merchants or even as holy men must be sent out into the various parts of the realm and bring back detailed reports of what they witnessed. Another preventative lay in frequent transfers of officials, so that they would not become too settled in any place and imagine they controlled it. Likewise there must be no favoritism or indulgence of any individual.

Now all this meant putting the responsibility squarely up to the Sultan. He must be the supervisor and trust to no man. As his rule extended over all the

country from China to Phoenicia, into Samarkand and the Trans-Oxiana and even to cities in Turkestan, there must be a vast organization for this minute surveillance of his entire administration, and the mere receiving of reports would not leave much surplus time on the hands of the Sultan, but Nizam ul Mulk was relentless. For the end was not yet. Even to the regulation of the royal habits went this admonitor, calm and unafraid. The monarch must be strict with himself, he declared, limiting indulgence in the cup that cheers and avoiding all suggestion of frivolity. His was the duty of setting a fitting example in all things, not least of which were the matter of fasting, of religious devotions, not neglecting the important duty of almsgiving.

Making due allowance for the partiality of the oriental chroniclers, it is still evident that the government was both wise and successful, and that the example of Malek Shah and his extraordinary vizier influenced powerfully the minor princes and governors of their time, with the result that the people flourished and were well content. Above all every one could feel himself secure in his person and his possessions and, at the time when security of either was the last thing to be found in Europe, and the very pilgrims to Rome were plundered both in the coming and the going, a man could travel throughout the Sultan's broad dominions and never need to worry about himself or his belongings. As for the latter, a cunning law put the responsibility directly up to the inhabitants of the com-

munity where they happened to be, so that the traveler might deposit them anywhere in perfect confidence that every man would protect them. In the rare case that they disappeared the cost of their replacement was put directly upon the dwellers in the vicinage.

In the matter of improvements, also, both aesthetic and material, great strides were made. Scholars, poets and philosophers were not only encouraged to come to court, but Nizam ul Mulk made every possible effort to attract them, and brought some from Constantinople to translate the Greek classics into Arabic. Every kind of talent was encouraged, and — most marvelous of all — all opinions were tolerated, the enlightened vizier being quoted as saying that fanaticism was more dangerous to the State than diversity of opinions, a theory upheld in our own day in London, where the firebrands may explode to their hearts' content all over Hyde Park.

Nizam ul Mulk erected splendid colleges and libraries at his own expense, and Malek Shah was no less munificent, and these were all handsomely supported. Altogether a most efficient administration, one which Signor Mussolini might cite as illustrating the benefits of a benevolent despotism.

To be sure, there was always plenty of bloodshed along with the blessings of peace. War was by no means in disrepute, and the modern idea that the sword should be converted into a ploughshare would have been received with astonishment and even indignation at the court of Malek Shah. The hero of the

period must be a strong man as well as wise, and the theory that man is by nature a fighting animal was not disputed by any one credited with common sense.

Here Asia was in accord with Europe. The world over rulers made war for their faith and their convictions, or even for pleasure or profit, and only the exceptional ones troubled about justification. To the victor belonged the spoils, and huzzahs rang in the ears of the home-coming conqueror, regardless of whether his had been a war of aggression or defense. Not a word of carping criticism to mar the rejoicings. Church bells rang their loudest in the Christian countries, while trumpets blared and drums rolled in the lands of Islam. In both the priests in their most gorgeous robes were in the forefront of the celebrants of victory. The losers, dragged through the mire for the greater glorification of the conqueror, accepted their fate as stoically as their natures allowed, nursing not a sense of wrong, but the hope of revenge. Their lot lay wholly in the hands of the conqueror, and it never occurred to any one that his decision was subject to any restrictions whatsoever. For reasons of policy, or because his happened to be a merciful nature, they might be spared, but none would protest — neither those directly concerned nor neutral onlookers — if they were all condemned to the shambles.

Kacim ed-Daula ak-Sonkar, deserted by his troops, is brought before Tadj ed-Daula Tutuch, his victorious enemy.

"If thou hadst taken me prisoner what wouldst thou have done with me?" demands the latter.

"I would have killed thee," is the scornful reply.

It is needless to relate what happened.

There is a fascination, even though it may be often of horror, in the strong contrasts between scenes of ideal chivalry and those of sardonic savagery in the panorama of the times. One gentle knight blinds his prisoners, cuts off their noses, hands and feet, and sends them back to their fellows as a warning of what they may look for. Another cuts off their heads, and has these roasted, spreading a report among their relations that they will grace the feast at his table. It may well be that this is the source from which a poet of somewhat later times drew his inspiration for the description of an even more diabolical banquet at which Richard the Lion-Hearted was the host.

Men, women and children lie in heaps upon the streets of devastated cities, their bodies a source of pestilence. Prisoners are marched to the shambles and cut down by the thousands in cold blood.

Another Malek Shah, ruler of Irak in the middle of the Twelfth Century, is clapped into prison by his vizier, Khass-Bec Ibn-Bulenker, and the latter, confident that ambition will prove mightier than the tie of blood, invites the brother of the deposed ruler to mount the throne. The latter accepted the invitation but promptly cut off the vizier's head and threw it before his partisans. The body went to the dogs.

Ibn Atar, proud ruler of Bagdad, has the body of a

condemned man dragged through the streets and then burned. It happens that he dies four days later and, when the funeral cortege passes through the streets, the crowd rushes in, seizes the body and subjects it to the same treatment.

The Archbishop of Roha levies a tax during the absence of the city's ruler, ostensibly to help defend the city, but really to enrich himself. When the enemy arrives he comes out of his church with his gold concealed under his robes, intending to make for the citadel before the foe can enter. But his attempt is ill-timed and the gates have already been forced. He seeks to flee but, weighted down by his ill-gotten riches, he stumbles before the very horses of the invaders and is trampled to death.

Against these instances of violence and selfishness may be set many instances of flaming heroism and generous forbearance at the height of victory, of knightly courtesy, of instinctive response to situations making appeal to the emotions. But truth compels the admission that these are the acts of rare individuals and not nearly so symptomatic of the times or the general attitude. Presently there will appear upon the scene a man named Saladin, to whom the exceptional becomes the commonplace.

CHAPTER FOUR

CITIES OF SPLENDOR

While Jerusalem was the goal of the Crusaders they took many other cities on the way, and all of these they found far advanced in comforts and attractiveness. To be sure, conditions had changed since the death of Nizam ul Mulk and his master some seven years before. The sons and the widow of Malek Shah had not his wisdom and his body was not yet cold when dissension had appeared in the palace. The widow, Turkan Khatoun, had tried to secure the throne for her son, then four years old, by concealing the death of the Sultan, and his body was denied all the usual honors while she caused the army to pass in review and swear fealty to the child. But the fruits of this stratagem did not ripen, for the little monarch died shortly after. Then the eldest son of Malek Shah, Bec-Yarok, and his brother Mohammed fell to fighting for the crown, and the great empire so carefully built by the father, fell apart. Soon the whole of Islam was in uproar and split into small sovereignties. The governors of provinces, usually mamelukes — that is, slaves whose ability and fidelity had induced the Sultan to place them in high positions of trust, which they

almost invariably filled with distinction — seized the opportunity to declare themselves independent, and became kings in their own right. In fact, it was this splitting up of the realm of Malek Shah, and the mutually destructive wars which accompanied it, which made possible the success of the Crusaders. Had the whole country been united under one strong ruler there would have been little chance for the Christian invaders.

It was because they had found the attractions of the cities they had captured, such as Edessa and Antioch, so alluring, that the march to Jerusalem had been so long delayed by the leaders of the First Crusade. Antioch, one of the great cities of the ancient world, and favored at one time for the capital of the eastern part of the Roman empire as against remoter Alexandria, although it had lost its one-time commanding position, was still a beautiful city, with echoes of its evil reputation as the center of dissolute pleasures, and surrounded by charming gardens and orchards. It still had noble palaces; and the world-famous beauty of Daphne, its island center, was not entirely gone. It made a splendid resting place for soldiers who had passed through almost unbearable hardships, and a convenient center from which to make foraging expeditions into the surrounding country.

Edessa, likewise one of the most ancient cities, and carrying its cultural history back to Babylonian times, had been in Christian hands in the later Roman period, and its cathedral, with a magnificent vaulted ceiling

covered with mosaics, was described by an Arab chronicler as one of the four wonders of the then known world. Altogether it boasted more than three hundred churches. It had been beautified by Greeks, Romans and Arabs at different periods, and was famous the world over. Its recapture from the Crusaders later on aroused intense feeling all over Europe, and was a considerable incentive in the starting of the Third Crusade. Here the army led by Godfrey of Bouillon and his brother Baldwin tarried for a time.

Tripoli and Tyre, two cities of Phoenician origin, the latter destined to play an important part in the subsequent contests between Saracen and Crusader, came under Christian rule later on. Both were cities of consequence and Tyre, especially, had strong fortifications and splendid edifices. The bazaars of Beirut were so splendidly adorned Mukaddasi thought it must be for the arrival of the Sultan. Its gardens and orchards were so lovely one "might say each was a pleasance for a king."

Of more consequence than any of these were certain cities still in Moslem control, and for the possession of which the Crusaders were busily making plans from the moment of their conquest of Jerusalem. Of these Aleppo was the subject of most frequent attack. "An excellent, pleasant and well-fortified city," wrote Mukaddasi, "the inhabitants of which are cultured and rich and endowed with understanding." The houses were built of stone and protected by a wall three and a half miles in circumference, with seven

gates. Situated on a plateau on the banks of a pleasant river, along which extended miles of fine gardens, the city enjoyed an unusually cool, healthy climate, and was busy and industrious, an important point in the caravan trade.

Emesa or Homs commanded the great north road from Egypt to Palestine and Damascus by the Orontes valley, and throughout its long history had seen much war. It had a wonderful old temple, devoted to Baal, the Sun God, of which ruins still remain, and under the Arabs was one of the strongest cities of Syria, with a powerful citadel and great walls. As the capital of a military district under the Omayyad Caliphs its power extended from Palmyra to the sea. " Its women were noted for their beauty as the men were for their courage," and it too had wonderful gardens and a fertile soil. Mukaddasi must have some unpleasant experience there, judging by the wind up of his observations.

" There is a citadel high above the town," he wrote, " which you perceive from afar off. When the Muslims conquered the place they seized the church and turned half of it into a mosque. It stands in the market-place and has a dome on the summit of which is seen the figure of a man in brass, standing upon a fish, and the same turns to the four winds. About this figure they relate many stories which are untrustworthy. The town has suffered great misfortunes, and is indeed threatened with ruin. Its men are witless."

The Crusaders made many attempts on Damascus, the chief city of Syria, and reputed to be the oldest city

in the world still inhabited. For a time it was the seat of the Omayyad Caliphate, this having been transferred there from Mecca when Ali, the Fourth Caliph, was murdered. At one time it looked as though it would succumb to the Christian invaders, but the leaders allowed themselves to be misled by bad advisers, and thereafter they were invariably repulsed.

Before the dawn of history it had been a city and in all recorded time it had evoked the enthusiasm of all who beheld it. At the northern edge of an extensive plain well watered by two rivers, it was ever surrounded by gardens and orchards of unusual fertility. Greeks, Romans, Egyptians and Arabs had contributed the best of their architecture, and the homes were famous for their beautiful and rich interiors, walls and ceilings inlaid with splendid mosaics and adorned with exquisite carvings. The Greeks had named it The Most Beauteous and the Arabs the Garden of the World and the Bride of the Earth. The seat of a great trade with all the countries of the East, and visited by countless caravans, its busy marts were picturesque not only in their exhibits of all the rare products of oriental workmanship but likewise in the varying types of humanity representing all the races of Asia.

It had not changed much at this time from what it had been when Mukaddasi wrote of the palaces and monuments, the edifices of wood and of brick erected by the Caliphs. Also of the Street called Straight, which extended from one end of the city to the other, and was " a fine market not roofed over." A city " in-

tersected by streams and begirt with trees," the water being conducted to the homes through conduits and canals.

"Here prices are moderate, fruits abound and snow and condiments are found. Nowhere else will be seen such magnificent hot baths, nor such beautiful fountains, nor people more worthy of consideration."

Though the Romans had left walls of tremendous strength and beautiful gates, which elicited the admiration of all beholders, the pride of the Damascene lay in the great mosque, a temple in the earliest times and a Christian church devoted to St. John after that. The inscription over the door, "Thy Kingdom, O Christ, is an everlasting kingdom, and thy dominion endureth throughout all generations," could not be removed, but otherwise the conversion to a mosque had been complete. It aroused Mukaddasi's enthusiasm as it had that of countless other visitors. He dilates upon its great magnificence. Outer walls of square stones, accurately set and of large size. Crowning them splendid battlements. The columns supporting the roof black polished pillars in triple rows and set widely apart. A great dome in the center over the niche. Around the court lofty arcades, with arched windows above, the whole area paved with white marble. The walls of the mosque for twice the height of man faced with variegated marbles. Above this, even to the ceiling, mosaics of various colors and in gold, showing "figures of trees and towns and beautiful inscriptions, all most exquisitely and finely worked. The capitals of

the columns are covered with gold and the vaulting above the arcades are everywhere ornamented in mosaics. Both within the shrine and around it are set cut agates and turquoises of the size of the finest stones used in rings."

To construct the mosaics Caliph al Walid brought skilled workmen from Persia, India, West Africa and Byzantium, "spending thereon the revenues of Syria for seven years, as well as eighteen shiploads of gold and silver. And this does not include what the Emperor of Byzantium gave to him in the matter of precious stones and other materials."

Eight years were devoted to the reconstruction, and when it was finished it required eighteen camels to bear to the Caliph the records of his accountants, showing the various items of cost. If there were no other proof of the wisdom of Al Walid it is shown in his disposition of these voluminous papers. Without so much as a glance at them he ordered them all to be burned, thus removing with one magnificent gesture every evidence of extravagance as well as saving the time and annoyance of reading them. Here was a monarch who appreciated the advantages of his position. Why burden himself and risk a quarrel with his contractors when lifting a tax here or there would take care of any unnecessary outlay? He wanted the best obtainable and he had it.

The railed-in space reserved for his prayers had gates plated with gold and the six hundred choice lamps which furnished illumination for the vast in-

terior hung from chains of gold. There was praying space for twenty thousand men.

Under the Moslems Ramleh and not Jerusalem had been the capital of Palestine, and Mukaddasi declared it needed only running water to make it "without compare the finest town in Islam." The houses were built of marble, white, green, red or blue, and most of them were beautifully sculptured and ornamented. Its chief mosque, called the White Mosque, well located in the market place, was one of the gems of Eastern architecture, rivalling that of Damascus. An emporium for the Egyptian trade, and an excellent commercial station for the two seas, with a mild climate and luscious fruits, it held a high place in the esteem of all the Moslems, even though the critical Mukaddasi has to add to his description of the people as being generous that they were "also rather foolish."

As for Jerusalem, while its architects in all times had devoted their best efforts to giving expression to the religious significance of the sacred places, they had not neglected its general aspects. All the buildings were of stone and nowhere, according to both Moslem and Christian chronicle, could be found finer or more substantial construction.

Surrounded by great walls, its streets paved with stone, it had large and well equipped bazaars, some of them covered with pierced stone roofs, after the Oriental manner, where the pilgrim as well as the in-dweller could supply all his wants. Before the Crusades it could boast of "all manner of learned men and doc-

tors, for which reason the heart of every man of intelligence yearns towards her."

In the space called the Noble Sanctuary were for the Moslem the great Aksa Mosque, the Dome of the Rock, the Dome of the Chain, as well as many lesser shrines. It was to the Rock the Angel Gabriel had conducted Mahomet on the night of his great flight from Mecca on the winged steed called Al Borak (The Lightning), and here he had met the other great prophets, Abraham, Moses and Jesus. There they had all prostrated themselves in common prayer, and from there Mahomet and the angel had climbed the Ladder of Light to the visitation of the Seven Heavens and the important interview with Allah, which settled for all time the form and content of the prayers of the faithful. It was on this same Rock the Ark of the Covenant had rested, and it had been at the center of the Temple of Solomon. Its very origin was divine, for it had fallen from Heaven, and its future magnificent, for underneath it, in the Cave of Souls, Allah will, on the Final Day, bring together the spirits of the true believers.

Naturally, therefore, one of the first efforts of the Moslem builders was to do honor to this sacred spot and, before the first century of the era of the Prophet had begun to wane, an octagonal dome of great beauty had been erected there to protect the Rock. It was of white marble and, according to some descriptions, the roof was covered with reddish gold. There were really two domes, one above the other, and they were sup-

ported by twelve piers and thirty pillars. The ceiling of the inner dome was overlaid with gold mosaics, and the interior must have been extraordinarily colorful when the brilliant Eastern sun shone through its fifty-six windows, each twelve feet high by nearly five feet across, glazed with glass of various hues. Or even at night, when the three hundred silver lamps suspended from the ceiling were all alight. The edifice was seven hundred and twenty feet around and one hundred and forty high, and could be seen from afar, making a striking picture from any of the paths over the surrounding mountains. The faithful entered through four gateways, each with a portico of marble, and in each of these were four beautiful doors.

El Aksa, called by the Christians the Mosque of Omar, for which the Caliph Abd al Malik probably used the stone from Justinian's Church of St. Mary, was equally imposing, particularly in the early days when its many gates were covered with gold and silver. This mosque was thought superior in beauty to even the fine mosque at Damascus, the explanation for this being that the Caliph and his architects had ever before their eyes the magnificent Church of the Holy Sepulcher, which would necessarily be both an inspiration and an object of emulation for the Moslems. Only a comparatively small part of el Aksa was enclosed, the worshippers assembling in the great and imposing colonnades, supported by marble pillars. There was a mighty roof and over this a magnificent dome.

The entire area of the Noble Sanctuary, two thousand feet long by seven hundred wide, was paved with stones whose joints were set in lead, and dotted with other domed edifices and lesser buildings, each with its legend of miracle and inspirational incident; and the Moslem pilgrim must have been in ecstasy equally with the Christian at the sight of the walls of the Holy City. Enclosed within great walls of its own, this space at the southeast corner of the city was a treasury of sacred history for the children of Islam. The very name of the Dome of the Chain recalled King David's receiving from the Angel Gabriel the means of telling whether a witness was truthful or the reverse. Some said it was a rod, which spanned his Judgment Hall, and on this hung a bell which, touched in turn by plaintiff and defendant, rang for the righteous one. Others, and to these the Caliph who built the Dome must have inclined, said it was a chain, and not a rod, and eliminated the bell altogether. This chain had the magic property that only the one who spoke the truth could grasp it, while it eluded all efforts of the unveracious.

Then there was the Talisman of el Aksa, the double inscription in the marble behind the pulpit — "Mahomet is Allah's Apostle," and "In the Name of Allah the Merciful, the Compassionate" — which made harmless the bite of serpent or scorpion. Ebn Asaker is said to have read in an ancient book that there were many of these deadly pests in Jerusalem, and certainly they were much feared, for the Christians had

a similar guardian against them in two grand columns at Holy Sepulcher, whose capitals were ornamented with figures of serpents. Because of these, it was said, anyone bitten would be safe against all ill effects provided he remained within the city walls for three hundred and sixty days, but if he went beyond them for even so much as a single day he would be a dead man. There were similar talismans all over the Holy Land. At Emesa it was a figure in the wall of the Dome, the upper part man and the lower scorpion, and whoso was bitten must press a bit of clay against this and drink a draught of water in which the clay had been dissolved. In the City Gate of Ma 'arrah an Numan was a column of stone which prevented the entrance of all scorpions, and if one were carried in and set free it would flee at once.

At the brink of the Valley of Jahannum one could hear the cries of the condemned in Hell, although Nasir i Khusrau, one of the Arab chroniclers, listened in vain; but probably all ears were not attuned to these cries. Even in our day there are those who never know when a false note is sounded.

The Christians, of course, had their legends, too, and the recital of the miracles quoted by their writers would take a volume. These centered around the Crucifixion and its aftermath, but there was many a tale of the intervention of Heaven and the saints at crises when only the supernatural could save the followers of the Cross. Most interesting is their interpretation of the origin and significance of the very same sacred

places and buildings already described from Moslem sources, for all these were at one time or another under Christian control and devoted to Christian uses. With the exception of the Church of the Holy Sepulcher, which was definitely founded by Constantine, and rebuilt after repeated destructions by another Greek emperor, few of the so-called Christian churches and holy places had always been that. The Dome of the Rock, the Dome of the Chain and el Aksa all had different origins in the Christian records from those attributed to them by the Moslems, and the same might be said of many others.

In one thing only did they agree. Jerusalem stirred the blood and elevated the soul. Well did it repay the struggles and the privations which most pilgrims had to endure to come within its magic influence. A fascinating as well as a beautiful city for all.

CHAPTER FIVE

PAVING THE WAY

FORTY years had passed since the First Crusade had burst into Asia Minor when Saladin was born. The Christians, or Franks, as the natives called them, had been in full possession of all of Palestine and the coast of Syria, of great cities like Antioch, Edessa, Acre, Tripolis, Sidon and Tyre. And, as they had settled down to normal life, and peaceful intercourse had been forced by circumstances upon the former enemies, the fires of fanaticism had slowly been extinguished. The languorous air of the Orient and its reposeful spirit were not to be resisted. An attitude of laissez-faire, of tolerance and indulgence, even of brotherly good will showed itself in the making. There were intermarriages, chiefly of Christian men and Moslem women, and alliances between Christian and Moslem rulers.

Osama, Arab prince of the Fortress of Sheyzar, a poet and picturesque chronicler of the times, tells of being a welcome guest of the Knights Templar at Jerusalem, and of their giving him one of their oratories in which to say his prayers. Surely the dove of peace must have exercised great influence when this most

militant of the organizations of the Church permitted its sacred precincts to be defiled by appeals to the Prophet! Osama makes it clear that this occurred only after the first Crusaders had surrendered to the spirit of their environment and before the Second Crusade had started. The pilgrims from Europe who arrived between these two periods, unfamiliar with the customs and influences of the country, were stirred to high indignation at the sight of the friendly relations between their co-religionists and "the pagans," and started in promptly to disrupt them.

Even at the best fundamental differences had not been overcome but only glossed over. The Christian clung to his Cross and the Moslem to his Prophet as tenaciously as ever, and the opposition of the two could never be composed. The mere possession of Jerusalem by one or the other would be a thorn in the flesh for the one excluded. The Arabs called it Bait al Mukaddas or Bait al Makdis — the Holy House — or al Kuds — the Holy — and held it next in sanctity to Mecca and Medina. It was to be the scene of "the Great Gathering on the last Judgment Day." On that day the Christians were convinced that the infidel Moslems would be plunged into the fires of hell, and the supporters of the Prophet were equally certain the infidel Christians would suffer the same dire punishment. But, in the brief interlude of good will, each had been willing to let the other live his life on this earth unmolested, leaving it to the Lord to provide the torments of the future.

That the Christians remained in possession was due largely to the internecine strife among the Mohammedans. Security had vanished and every city was a prize for the strongest sword. The slave of today might be the master tomorrow. In the constant upsets and revolutions no ruler could depend upon his followers. The tale is told of a Sultan who was reduced to begging at the door of the mosque where he had shone in splendor. The people, bewildered by the frequent changes of leadership accepted every new master with indifference. Their lot would be neither better nor worse with the change of ruler.

With the piping times of fraternal good will between Christians and Moslems at an end, the former extended their power. An Arab chronicler laments at the weakness of the Moslems and the ever-increasing raids of the Christians. " Their troops were numerous and their hands extended as if to seize all Islam. Day after day their raids followed one another. Through these they did the Mussulmans much mischief, smiting them with desolation and ruin. Thus was the happy star of the Mussulmans darkened, the sky of their puissance cloven in twain and the sun of their prosperity dimmed."

Except for a few strong cities the Christians appeared to be everywhere. Even to the frontier of Egypt. They took the people's money and their goods and " weighed them down with scorn and oppression." They interrupted commerce and even those towns which escaped their invasion were compelled to pay

AN ENCOUNTER BETWEEN SARACENS AND CRUSADERS
(*From a 12th Century Window Formerly at St. Denis*)

tribute for their safety. In their misery, concludes the historian, men longed for death.

But this condition could not endure forever. After all, the oppressors were in a strange land and far outnumbered. Moreover, the native inhabitants were not humble in spirit, but warriors by birth and descent. The time must come when they would cease from fighting each other and turn upon the common enemy. This happened when Zenghi, surnamed Imad ed-Din, or Pillar of the Faith, got into his stride.

Zenghi was the son of a slave of Malek Shah, who had been held in high esteem by his enlightened master. Slaves were not in those times the abject creatures the name would seem to denote. Ak-Sonkor, the Gyrfalcon, was made court chamberlain and later governor of the province of Aleppo, in which office he achieved a high reputation. At his death his followers rallied around the ten-year-old son, and Kurbugha, ruler of Mosul and one of the most important of the Moslem chiefs, took them all under his protection. The boy was bred to be a soldier and saw his first battle when he was only fifteen. In fact, he saved the day, for the issue was trembling in the balance when his protector called upon the boy's adherents to fight for him, and they responded with an ardor which set the enemy flying.

Zenghi grew up to be a fine specimen of his race mentally and physically and to do great honor to his name. The Crusaders first became aware of the menace which lay in him at the siege of Tiberias where,

outriding his followers, he drove his lance against the gate of the city, and fought the enemy single-handed, escaping without hurt.

For a long time he served various masters, successive rulers of Mosul, the Caliph of Bagdad and finally the Seljuk Sultan Mahmud. Everywhere he rose quickly to the top and was rewarded with high dignities and rich offices, and in 1127 he became governor of Mosul and Jezira, and was entrusted with the bringing up of the Sultan's two sons, a dignity which carried with it the title of Atabeg, or Governor of Princes.

The honors and power thus acquired might have satisfied any other man of his time, but for Zenghi they were only the means with which to accomplish his greater ambition — to wrest from the Franks the possessions they had taken from his people. For the rest of his life he devoted himself single-heartedly to this work.

His first task was to convince the other Moslem chiefs that he must not be interfered with and, at this time, the only way to accomplish this was to overcome in outright fighting those who would be his rivals. These were no mean opponents. The Ortukid princes were wont to sweep down from their mountain fortresses in raids which carried terror throughout the surrounding territory, and were held in respect by even the domineering Franks. The Caliph of Bagdad himself nursed a grudge against Zenghi for his support of Mahmud.

Zenghi's first act was to enter Diarbekr, the country of the Ortukids, and capture a town which had recently revolted against the rule of Mosul. He followed this up by taking a number of other fortified places, after which he arranged a truce with Joscelin de Courtenay, ruler of the cities forming the outposts of the Crusaders along the upper branch of the Euphrates, which left him free to turn into Syria. Having consolidated his conquests he took advantage of an appeal from Aleppo, long subject to Frankish extortions, to take possession of that once powerful city. Two years later he marked his opening of the campaign against the Christians by the capture of a frontier fortress, Athareb, which had been a menace to all the country around Aleppo.

It was during the siege of this fortress that one of the warriors of King Baldwin of Jerusalem drew the latter's attention to the fact that this was the same young man who had ridden unattended up to the gate of Tiberias, and suggested that it would be well to extinguish so dangerous a spark before it became a conflagration. Baldwin decided to act on this counsel and led a goodly force of knights and other tried warriors to meet the young upstart. Zenghi's aids advised retirement before so formidable an army, especially as the defenders of Athareb were likewise renowned fighters and the danger of being caught between the two forces was considerable, but Zenghi was always ready to accept desperate chances. His capture of Jezira had been achieved only by swimming

part of his army across the Tigris, which was a roaring flood a day later. So now, instead of turning away, he went boldly to meet the King's forces. Always in the forefront of the ensuing battle, shouting the war cry of the Prophet, "Take a taste of Hell!" Zenghi led his men, frenzied by his example, to a veritable slaughter of Baldwin's "princes, knights and counts." The victors waded through a sea of blood, according to Ibn el-Athir, "and the swords of God found their scabbards in the necks of their foes."

A fierce opponent and a severe master. His rule was no gentle one, his discipline unyielding. "There can be but one tyrant in my land," he said. A boatman, waking from sleep at his post, saw the cold eyes of the master above him and dropped dead of fear. The government was patterned on that of Malek Shah, but the methods were ruthless. Spies were everywhere. No man was allowed to leave his dominions lest he betray some weakness in its defenses. Acts of violence were punished by crucifixion. His personal slaves walked in fear and trembling, a fact which was to lead to tragic consequences.

Against this was the fact that he indulged himself no more than others and held in grateful memory those who served him. As will be shown later, it was this trait which helped materially to bring the family of Saladin to the front at a critical time in its fortunes.

With occasional reverses, which were dismissed with indifference, rising promptly to opportunity whenever fortune favored him, he continued to thrust

back the Crusaders until he came to his greatest achievement, the conquest of Edessa. This, "the Eye of Upper Mesopotamia," happened to be under the rule of Count Joscelin II, who was more disposed to seek out the pleasures of life than to observe the duties of governorship. During his absence from the city Zenghi, masking his purpose by the siege of an unimportant town, suddenly descended upon the city, defended only by paid mercenaries, and forced its strong walls by unremitting assaults.

December 23, 1144 his soldiers poured through the breach they had made, intoxicated with joy and burning to avenge the injuries the Mohammedan world had suffered from the lords of the city. Zenghi was not one of the Moslem warriors who restrained their followers from the glut of victory, and there was no hindrance to the merciless conquerors as they fell upon the vanquished. Into the churches, overturning altars and crosses, cutting down monks and priests; into the homes, slaying right and left, and sparing only the young men for future slavery, and the young girls for the harems; into the bazaars, plundering right and left — it looked as though the great city would become a shambles. Fortunately, Zenghi arrived before the ruin was complete. The sight of the beauty of the city, of its wide streets and noble buildings, overwhelmed him. To allow these to become the abiding place of desolation would be a crime. So the word went forth and the mad troopers were checked. The youths and the maidens were freed, the property

restored to its owners, the inhabitants drawn out from their hiding places, and all were encouraged to resume their normal lives, only now it would be under a new ruler.

Two years later, at the age of sixty-two, Zenghi was assassinated while he was carrying on the siege of Castle Jaber near the Euphrates. He had wakened in his tent to find some of his slaves drinking his wine, and they, fearful of the punishment which they felt sure awaited them on the morrow, fell upon him before he could cry out and despatched him with their daggers. To this inglorious end came the first of the great rulers of the Moslems who had been able to drive back the Christian invaders and point the way to their ultimate suppression.

After Zenghi, Nur ed-din. The latter was one of three sons left by Zenghi, but he proved to be the one that really counted. Ruler of Aleppo at the beginning, he took up the work of his father and carried it far beyond. Only two months after Zenghi's death Count Joscelin, urged on by the Armenians of Edessa, made a night attack upon the city. The Turkish garrison was asleep, and the city was taken without difficulty, but the citadel remained secure; and before Joscelin could force this, Nur ed-din, apprised of the situation, charged across the country and hemmed in the rash count. In the effort to escape he and his Armenian allies, who were fleeing from the wrath of Nur ed-din, were caught between his army and the garrison from the citadel. There was fearful slaughter, especially of

the Armenians. Joscelin escaped, but this meant only a reprieve for him. Later on he was captured by one of Nur ed-din's emirs and handed over to his tender mercies. The count had been foolish enough to send the armor of Nur ed-din's squire to the Sultan Masud, Nur ed-din's enemy, and at the same time had promised to follow this with that of the master. Now he paid the penalty. Nur ed-din ordered that he be blinded and thrown into the dungeon at Aleppo. He died there nine years later.

As was told earlier, the fall of Edessa caused a sensation throughout Europe, and now the repeated successes of Nur ed-din led to the Second Crusade. St. Bernard of Clairvaux, one of the most saintly and eloquent preachers of the time, was the inspiration, and not only aroused the multitude to a pitch of frenzy but induced two monarchs to leave their thrones to lead the new crusaders, Conrad III of Germany and Louis VII of France. The latter's wife, Queen Eleanor, took the cross, also, to become the subject of both romance and scandal later.

Begun in an ecstasy of exaltation, this crusade flattened out into dire failure. The cry was for St. Bernard to take command, but this he refused. Even before the start he was having trouble in bringing zeal within moderation. In Germany a nun led the massacre of the Jews. Conrad's army, the first to be on the way, was without discipline. The countries through which it passed were aroused against it by the depredations of uncontrolled soldiers. A flood from the

river Melas swept over the encampment between Adrianople and the Greek capital, drowning thousands. Manuel, the Byzantine Emperor, was incensed at them and did what he could underhandedly to ruin the enterprise. It is alleged he had chalk mixed with the flour he sold them and cheated them with bad money. Worse still, he gave them guides who misled them and stirred up the Turks to attack them when they were least prepared to fight. Barely a tenth survived to retreat to Nicaea.

Louis had better fortune at the outset. He contrived to join forces with the remnant of Conrad's army at Nicaea and the combined host, proceeding southward along the coast of Asia Minor, got as far as Ephesus. There they learned the Turks were gathered in force to oppose further progress, and Conrad decided to return to Constantinople and stay there for the winter. Louis kept on and was encouraged by his success in crossing the Maeander, but two days later, after passing through Laodicea, he found himself faced by a range of hills "whose summit appeared to touch the heavens, whilst the torrent at its base reached down into hell." Unwisely a part of the army descended the slope and went into camp where they were exposed to the arrows of the enemy, who commanded the heights. Apparently the Turks were aided by Greeks, who could almost always be counted upon for obstruction to the Crusaders. While Louis vainly sought to extricate his men the onslaught turned into a massacre. Trunks of trees and great stones rolled down

upon the helpless mass, sweeping horses and men alike into the abyss. It was a poor remnant which finally reached Attalia. Here Louis arranged with the Greek governor for the transfer of the unarmed pilgrims to Tarsus, while he took his army to Antioch by sea; but the trust was betrayed, and the sufferings of the former were so great many forsook their faith for that of the enemy, who took pity on them and fed them when the Greeks left them to starve. "O kindness, more cruel than Greek treachery!" exclaimed the Latin chronicler, "for, giving bread, they stole the true faith."

Louis was well received at Antioch (March, 1148), where Raymond, his wife's uncle, was the ruler, but later there was disagreement, for Louis suspected the uncle of being too attentive to the wife. There is a tale of later days which asserts that it was not Raymond who aroused the jealousy of the royal spouse, but a valiant young Saracen named Saladin, the report of whose heroic exploits had thrown the queen into a fever of love. The author even goes into the details of the romance, telling how the queen made known her heartsickness and how the gallant Saladin sent to the harbor of Antioch a splendid barge to transport his lady love. The latter, leaving Louis asleep in the royal couch, stole to the strand and was about to be handed into the boat when Louis appeared and dragged her back. A pestiferous maid had betrayed her at the crucial moment. Alas, for the cruel intervention of historical fact into this charming idyll! Saladin

at this time was a schoolboy of thirteen in faraway Baalbek.

The story goes on to tell that when Louis upbraided Eleanor and demanded pourquoi? she replied with a torrent of upbraiding. He, the laggard, was resting at his ease, enjoying the flesh-pots of her uncle's providing and forgetful of holy Jerusalem to which he had pledged himself to make his way. Be that as it may, Louis did go on to Jerusalem, and Eleanor with him, refusing to be side-tracked by Raymond into adventures against Aleppo and other cities.

In the meantime Conrad had gone to Acre by sea and joined in an attack upon Damascus. King Baldwin of Jerusalem, supported by Louis and Conrad, marched across the Jordan with the Holy Cross before them, and it looked as though the capital of Syria would soon be theirs. But in the thick orchards and gardens surrounding the city lay the enemy in ambush and their arrows found many a target in the ranks of the Crusaders. Only after hard fighting were the Saracens cleared out, but when the Christians sought the river to quench their thirst they found another army awaiting them. Conrad was the hero of this occasion, and by his spirited example, incited an attack which swept the enemy back into the city.

However, the expedition proved fruitless. Saracen gold and cunning accomplished what fighting could not. The jealousies between the native Christians and their fellows from over-seas were skilfully exploited, the former having pointed out to them the probability

that success would only mean their subjection to the French and German kings. Nor were the personal rivalries of the leaders neglected. Add to this the fact that the army was suffering from lack of food as well as leadership. Soon there was talk of abandonment of the siege and Conrad went off in disgust and sailed for home. Louis followed him a year later.

In Europe the failure aroused revilings and consternation. The good Abbé of Clairvaux was no longer spoken of as a saint, but taunted with the failure of his prophecies. In Asia Nur ed-din resumed his triumphant progress. And between the Christians of Europe and their brethren in the Holy Land had been sown mutual seeds of mistrust. All these conditions helped pave the way for Saladin.

CHAPTER SIX

FROM THE LOINS OF FIGHTERS

LET US pass to our subject," writes Beha ed-din, one of the foremost of the learned men of Islam, intimate companion of Saladin at the height of his career, and chief among his biographers, " and write of that Prince strong to aid, who re-established the doctrine of the true faith, struck to earth the worshippers of the Cross, and raised the standard of justice and benevolence; he who was the prosperity (Salah) of the world and of the faith (ed-din), the Sultan of Islam and of the Moslems, the warrior who delivered the Holy City from the hands of the polytheists, the servant of the two Sanctuaries, Abu el-Mozaffer Yusuf."

Abu el-Mozaffer Yusuf or Salah ed-din Yusuf ibn Ayub was his real name, but to the European world Saladin.[1] Saladin was a Kurd, one of that aloof, proud, independent, warring race of mountaineers, who occupied the highlands beyond Armenia, and who resembled not a little the Highland Scots in their clannishness and readiness to possess themselves

[1] It was the custom of the Occidentals to simplify the high sounding appellatives of the Saracens. Nur ed-din, for example, became Noradin, and Beha ed-din was changed to Bohadin.

of the goods of others. Consequently, not popular with their neighbors, for which condition they seemed to care not a whit. Ignorant, and unused to the ways of civilization, living largely a pastoral life when they were not raiding the Armenians or Persians, yet noted for their sense of honor and their hospitality.

Saladin's family belonged to the Rawadiya clan, and had their ancestral home in a village near Dovin, a town of some importance near Erivan in Trans-Caucasia. A Moslem chronicler alleged he could trace the family history back through thirty-three generations to Adam, but Saladin himself, although pride of ancestry was a dominant characteristic of the Kurds, confessed he knew none of his forbears beyond his grandfather, Schadi ben Meronan.

If ever the fates seemed unpropitious, they must have had that appearance to the family of the future Sultan at the time of his birth, which occurred in the year 532 of the Mohammedan calendar, or sometime between 1137 and 1138 of our own. Banished on the very night of his arrival from the place where they had been all-powerful, with no refuge in sight, the future of this babe in a world torn with savage war and dissension, must have looked dark indeed. Had any one then ventured to predict that this homeless infant would one day be the pride of Islam, and famous throughout the world, there would have been a sarcastic smile on the grim face of his uncle Shirkuh, if not on that of Ayub, his less temperamental father.

Not that either of them was hopeless of improve-

ment in their then seemingly desperate situation. The blood that was in the veins of the Sultan to be was not of the kind which submits tamely to reversals of fortune, however serious. Many a time in the career which was just beginning there would be trying moments which only invincible courage and high resolve, coupled with fertility of resource and ability to think through baffling problems to a happy conclusion, would be able to surmount, and all these fortunate qualities might be traced back to inheritance. It was really an exceptional family and this latest sprig was to develop true to form.

Just prior to the dire situation mentioned all had been well with them. Schadi had migrated to Bagdad, probably to find better opportunity for a career for his sons, and there the governor, Bihrous, who had been befriended by Schadi in Dovin when the former had been only a slave, gave Ayub (Job) the command of the fortified castle of Tekrit, on the left bank of the Tigris. Schadi and Shirkuh went along, and the prosperity of the family seemed assured when Shirkuh had a quarrel with an official. The suggestion is that the former was acting the cavalier in defense of a woman. That would not be so strange, for the Kurds were noted for their chivalrous attitude towards the fair sex. At all events, Shirkuh, by nature impetuous, ran his sword through the offender, who perished promptly.

A killing now and then was not a serious offense in that time and place, but the dead man was a mem-

ber of the government, and Bihrous already had cause to be annoyed at the conduct of the sons of Schadi. Very likely the first offense was the more serious in the eyes of Bihrous, and the second only furnished another excuse for meting out punishment.

Ayub had been the offender then, and fortunate was the apparently misguided impulse which had inspired him; for it brought about direct contact with Zenghi, and placed the latter under deep obligation. Zenghi was in dire distress at the time. One of his rare reverses had put his army in flight and they had reached the Tigris with the victorious army of Sultan Masoud close behind and eager to wipe out the defeated. Across the water stood the frowning fortress of Tekrit, accessible only if the holder thereof was willing. Ayub chose to be the savior of Zenghi, provided the necessary boats to convey him and his forces across the river, and the provisions and equipment to help them on their way. It was a service Zenghi never forgot, but Bihrous did not appreciate this aid to the Atabeg of Mosul, who was subjecting all the other rulers to his will. He wrote to Ayub:

"You had our enemy in your power. Why, then, did you treat him so well and let him escape?"

Ayub's explanation is not recorded, but the fact remains he had, by good judgment or good fortune, thrown his lot with the future master, and now, needing a job, he turned to Zenghi for his reward, and found him ready to give it.

Shirkuh also received satisfactory employment in

the army of Zenghi, and both were promoted rapidly. With the conquest of Baalbek in 1139 Ayub was made its governor, and here the infant developed into sturdy boyhood. It was no mean town in those days. The Heliopolis of the ancients, City of the Sun, had been important as a center of the worship of Baal, had been a Roman colony and contained much interesting architecture. It had also the reputation of being the coldest place, not only in Syria but of the known world. At least, one must draw that conclusion from the legend quoted by the people of Syria. "When men asked of the Cold, 'Where shall we find thee?' the Cold replied, 'In the Balka'; and when they further asked, 'But if we meet thee not there?' then the Cold said, 'Verily, in Baalbek is my home.'"

However, Saladin was not affected adversely by the severity of the climate, but grew up to be vigorous and hardy. After the death of Zenghi, his father decided it would be better not to get caught in the quarrel between his two sons over the succession, and when the Seljuk king of Damascus appeared before Baalbek, and there was no sign of aid from Mosul, he made the best terms he could, which included the grant of a number of small but prosperous villages and a comfortable residence in Damascus. Evidently he was able to impress upon the ruler his ability to be of service for presently he was made commander of the army. He was that, and in control of the city, when the troops of Nur ed-din appeared before the gates and demanded its surrender.

The situation now was decidedly interesting, for the commander of the besieging force was none other than Brother Shirkuh who, having struck out for himself after the death of Zenghi, had attached himself to Nur ed-din. He and Ayub came together to discuss the problem which confronted them, objectively and in calmness. Their conclusion must have been that it would be a shame to be at each other's throat, besides slitting those of a lot of other valiant Moslems. The upshot was Ayub's decision to surrender the city. This decision he was able to make known to the leading emirs of Damascus in such fashion as to convince them of its wisdom, and the gates were opened accordingly.

Thereafter the brothers held the same high place in the esteem of Nur ed-din that had been vouchsafed them by the latter's father. Shirkuh was made Vice Regent of the territory of Damascus and Ayub Governor of the City. From then on Saladin's education was received in this important center of Moslem culture.

After the disastrous Second Crusade, the control of Asia Minor was split up among many rulers, including the Emperor of Constantinople, Turks, Turcomans, Seljoucides, the princes of lesser Armenia. The coasts of Syria, the counties of Antioch and Tripoli and all of Palestine were in the hands of the Franks, of whom Baldwin III, grandson of Baldwin II, held Jerusalem, while various Christian nobles ruled elsewhere. While they usually acted together against the Saracens this

was not always so, and there were even occasions when the Christian ruler was allied to a Moslem. Feudalism, which was dying out in Europe, held sway in the Holy Land, as it had from the beginning of the Crusades, and holders of even small fiefs guarded jealously their independence. However, the weakness resulting from this lack of a concentrated control was matched up to this time by equal, if not greater, lack of cohesiveness among the Moslems. Finally, Egypt was held by the Fatimites, who had a Caliph of their own, and looked with scorn and enmity upon him of Bagdad.

Little is known of Saladin's youth and this little is contradictory. His devotion to his faith in later years, and his strong attachment to its pious teachers and expounders, have led some to assume that he was a model of propriety, assiduous in his studies and shunning the usual pleasures of the young — almost a recluse, in fact, and indifferent to his opportunities as the son of the leading favorite at the splendid court of Nur ed-din. His father was the only man of Damascus permitted to remain seated in the presence of the Sultan while his uncle, entrusted with the command of great armies and employed on the most important missions, was regarded as almost the equal of his master; yet this peer of the proudest of the young nobles is supposed to have been absorbed in his prayer books and the wisdom of his elders to the exclusion of all of the impulses and joys natural to his years. The only basis for this assumption appears to be

the silence of the writers of his time, including his greatest admirers, upon the years of his adolescence.

The education of a youth in his position was simple enough. It included a thorough study of the Koran, committing as much of this to memory as his industry and natural retentiveness permitted, training in the elegant use of Arabic, both for speaking and writing, and the understanding and creation of poetry. This, with such physical development as was requisite for a future warrior. As he approached manhood he would be instructed in the use of the sword and the principles of warfare.

For relaxation there was always chess on the mental side, horse racing in the public squares, polo (originally imported from Persia) and various forms of the chase. And, again, there was falconry and hunting the lion with coursing leopards, of which the rich kept many in their stables, as the great of England kept hounds. Finally, for the more courageous and venturesome was the greatest of all sports, stalking the king of beasts.

Perhaps it is not so certain that young Saladin was the naïve and retiring person he has been made out to be, and possibly there is another and quite different explanation for the fact that such rigid silence as to his growing years was maintained by the biographers of his day. Did they possibly withhold their pens because they wished, with true oriental reticence, to maintain before the world the ideal character of later years, untouched by any spot of youthful frivolity?

Could it not even be that the idol of Beha ed-din and many of his confrères was given to pleasures in the heyday of his life which caused the graybeards to look askance, and to refrain from comment, out of regard for his family? A vigorous young man, the scion of stock ever at the forefront of adventure, ready to take chances and play with fortune at her own odds, and having at his disposal means to satisfy all reasonable desires, was little likely to mope in the corners while the pulse of youth beat hot and strong. There is a definite intimation to the contrary in a brief sentence of his biographer, the already alluded to Cadi Beha ed-din. Referring to the crisis which followed the death of his uncle, and the consequent call upon the young man to meet his destiny, Beha ed-din asserted that from that day Saladin "put aside wine and the pleasures of the world."

One may toy, therefore, with the suspicion that he must have dallied with them earlier, some time before we hear of his setting out for Egypt at the age of twenty-seven in the company of his uncle. So the music of the fountains of Damascus was not without its subtle appeal for him as for other spirited youth. Could the man charged with being too reckless at polo have been a pale and listless youth? Or the father of a score of children indifferent to beauty in the slave markets or behind the latticed windows? It seems altogether illogical to maintain that the intrepid soldier and brilliant ruler of men had a colorless youth.

That he was not ambitious to shine at that time

appears conclusively. He offered objections to his uncle, when the latter wished him to be his aid on the march to Egypt. He admitted as much to Beha ed-din years after. Would not this in itself suggest that the lotos life of Damascus had enticements which a carefree young man was not anxious to abandon? Even after the first Egyptian campaign, in which he showed marked talent and achieved noteworthy success, he was still reluctant to abandon Damascus, and it took quite emphatic persuasion on the part of Nur ed-din — apparently his father as well as uncle had failed to move him — to influence him to join the second mission to Egypt. Of course, real resistance to the Sultan was out of the question.

It is natural in delving into the careers of the great to seek the exact moment when irresponsible youth was fired suddenly with eagerness to don the robe of maturity. That time actually arrived for Saladin in the course of this campaign — or rather, at the end of it. It came suddenly and unexpectedly, but the hitherto aimless youth did not hesitate. It meant the end of his leisurely past and of whatever had made Damascus so attractive. The urge of youth could no longer be allowed to interfere with the stern realities of a strenuous purpose. Fate opened the doors of opportunity, revealing a great career. Its dazzling possibilities proved irresistible. Never was that vision to leave him. It was to be lode-star for the balance of his life.

CHAPTER SEVEN

SULTAN OF EGYPT

A QUARREL between a vizier who had been deposed and his successful rival led to Shirkuh's first expedition to Egypt. Shawer, the unlucky one, came to Nur ed-din with the promise of great reward if he would put him back in power, but it was Shirkuh who overcame the Syrian Sultan's reluctance to go so far afield while he still was occupied with the Franks. The spirited old soldier, ever eager for new adventure and ambitious to reach even greater power than he possessed, saw a brilliant opening for himself in Shawer's proposition.

Egypt, after centuries of greatness under the Fatimite regime, was now in her decline. As the orthodox Caliph at Bagdad had been compelled to relinquish all real power and content himself with the dignities and luxuries appertaining to his religious supremacy, so the heretical Caliph, holding the support of the Shiites because of his alleged descent from Fatima, daughter of the Prophet, and Ali, her husband, had become a mere puppet in the hands of his vizier. The country was ripe fruit, waiting for the first bidder with courage.

This was not unknown either at home or abroad. In truth, the gold in the treasury of the Caliphs had bought off more than one would-be conqueror. At this very time an annual tribute was going to the King of Jerusalem to keep off the Crusaders. But Nur ed-din's increasing power created a new situation. Shawer's appeal to the Sultan of Syria indicated the view of it taken by the crafty Egyptian politicians. Nur ed-din would never let the Christians take Egypt if he could prevent it. Neither would they look on supinely if Nur ed-din undertook its conquest. The game of the Egyptians, therefore, was to play the one against the other. That Shawer had this in mind at the very moment when he was appealing for Nur ed-din's assistance was abundantly proven by later events. Nur ed-din must have suspected as much, for the payment offered by Shawer was big enough to tempt even a Sultan. The entire costs of the invasion and one third of the revenues of Egypt was his offering.

The decision was finally forced by Amalric, the new King of Jerusalem. Dargham, the ruling vizier, who had deposed Shawer, thought he might save the usual tribute to Jerusalem, evidently relying upon the fact that Amalric was occupied with the encroachments of Nur ed-din. Thereupon Amalric led an army into Egypt. Faced with the possibility that he might hold the country, thus threatening him from two sides, Nur ed-din acted with promptness.

Amalric had already defeated Dargham, who saved himself only by opening the dams and flooding the

country, after which he offered a compromise which Amalric accepted. The latter had left the country when Dargham heard of Shawer's negotiations, and fearful of what these might produce, sent a proposal to Jerusalem for a hard and fast alliance against Nur ed-din. Before Amalric could act on this Shirkuh was on his way to Egypt with a chosen force of Turcomans, Saladin leading the vanguard. Dargham was defeated in a battle at Bilbeis, and retired to Cairo, but both the Caliph and the army turned against him and he was finally killed by the populace. Shawer again became vizier and the ostensible object of the invasion was accomplished. Immediately he broke his promises.

Shirkuh seized Bilbeis and the eastern province, placing Saladin in charge of the former, whereupon Shawer turned to Amalric, who was not slow in seeing the wisdom of getting Nur ed-din's army out of the country. If Nur ed-din was threatened by the union of Egypt and Christian Palestine, the latter would be so even more seriously if caught between Damascus and Egypt. The combined forces of Amalric and Shawer penned in the army of Shirkuh at Bilbeis, which was under siege for three months. Then Nur ed-din came to the rescue with a successful campaign in Palestine, compelling Amalric to return. On October 27th, 1164 terms were arranged.

Shirkuh returned to Damascus to find Nur ed-din home from his victorious campaign, in which he had taken many important cities and a number of distinguished prisoners, including Bohemond, Prince

of Antioch, Count Raymond of Tripoli, and Hugh the Brown of Lusignan, who had all been taken in chains to Aleppo.

Curiously enough, Ibn el Athir, who was one of the distinguished chroniclers of the times, relates an anecdote of Saladin, quoted Zeki ed-din Ahmed ibn Mes-'oud, "professor of the art of reading the Koran," in which Saladin is alleged to have been present at the successful siege of Harem, prior to the Egyptian experience. According to him three young officers, of whom Saladin was one, were discussing the siege when one said: "I wish Nur ed-din would make me his lieutenant in Harem, when he has taken it." Thereupon Saladin spoke up: "I pray to God may his name be blessed and exalted — that if the Chehid [Master] conquers Egypt, he will make me commander in that country." Turning then to the third man, he added: "And you also must make a wish." To this the latter replied: "Monseigneur, when you will be master of Egypt, and Medj ed-din master of Harem, what will remain for me?" But Saladin and Medj ed-din persisting, this modest one finally admitted he had set his heart upon the city of Eimm, but that all this was mere waste of time, for "God alone will execute that which he has decided in his wisdom." Of course, all three received that which they had wished for. A pretty tale, whose veracity is open to question, it appeared in a history of Aleppo written by Kemal ed-din ibn al A'din, but is not mentioned by any of the other chroniclers.

At this same time, in the battle which preceded the siege, occurred an incident which illustrates Nur ed-din's faith in the efficacy of prayer. The right wing had retreated before the cavalry of the Franks, whereupon he dismounted from his horse, and throwing himself upon the ground, cried out:

"O my God and my Seigneur and my Master! Mahmoud, son of Zenghi and grandson of ak-Sonkor, implores Thee not to frustrate his hope and to come to his aid. Thou wilt aid thus the faith Thou hast revealed to Thy Prophet and Apostle. Deign to answer my prayer and render happy my return to my home. Permit not that mine enemies rejoice in my reverse!" He remained prostrated, rolling his body on the ground, while the tears rolled down his cheeks.

The possibility that all this was only excellent acting — a performance not beyond oriental conception — intended to arouse his men to the limit of their powers, was suggested by one commentator, who insisted that the retreat of the right wing had been a deliberate ruse, meant to entice the cavalry of the enemy to a fruitless chase, and leaving the rest of the Christian army exposed to attacks it could not withstand, as turned out to be the sequence of events. The same maneuver, as we will see, was used later by other Moslem commanders.

What Shirkuh had learned of conditions in Egypt only whetted his appetite for the second expedition. For the Egyptians as soldiers he had only contempt,

while the resources of the country and what still remained of its former grandeur made it a most desirable prize. Cairo was still a wonderful city, beautiful in architecture and decoration, while the riches in the palace of the Caliph created a perfect fairyland.

The ambassadors of Amalric, Hugh of Caesarea and Geoffrey Fulcher, Knight Templar, found it difficult to believe their eyes when they penetrated it somewhat later. Passing through mysterious corridors and doors guarded by soldiers in picturesque costume, they came into spacious courts open to the sky, surrounded by great arcades resting on marble pillars; saw carved and panelled ceilings inlaid with gold and rich mosiacs, and walked on mosaic pavements. Rich silks and other stuffs, embroidered with jewels, greeted their ravished eyes, while they listened to the songs of birds of wondrous plumage, the like of which they had never seen before. "Beasts that seemed to belong rather to the world of art and dreams than that of waking life" stalked in the gardens and in the halls beyond, "a variety of animals such as the ingenious hand of the painter might depict, or the license of the poet invent, or the mind of the sleeper conjure up in the visions of the night, — such, indeed, as the regions of the East and the South bring forth, but the West never sees, and scarcely hears of." Finally they reached the audience chamber where they were confronted by an array of gorgeously attired attendants and sumptuous curtains embroidered with pearls,

whose long, heavy folds gave promise of another and possibly the most grandiose spectacle of all.

Shawer, who was himself conducting the emissaries of the Christian king — much against his will — humbled himself before this curtain, whereupon it parted, displaying the Caliph upon his throne of gold. It was admittedly a sacrilege for these unbelieving knights to be in the presence of the holy Imam, but it was a case of necessity. Amalric, profiting by the experience of Nur ed-din, had refused to come to Shawer's aid unless his promises were sealed by the Caliph in person. Undoubtedly many an adherent of El Adid fingered the hilt of his dagger in the presence of this unheard-of presumption, but the Caliph himself had consented and there could be no appeal. As for the fearless knights, overcome though they were by the marvels they had witnessed, they never for a moment lost sight of the object of their intrusion, and when the Caliph offered his gloved hand in confirmation of his vizier's promises, Hugh declared stoutly that "troth has no need of covering," and that princes could make no secret reservations when they gave a pledge. Brutality following insult, and every Moslem ear tingled at the infidel's rudeness, but Hugh held the winning cards and, after a moment's wincing hesitation, the Caliph withdrew his glove with a forced smile and proffered his naked hand.

There must have been endless gold in the treasury, for the alliance thus sanctioned called for the immediate payment of two hundred thousand golden

dinars, worth in the money values of today almost that many English pounds, and a like payment at a later date, besides the annual tribute.

In the meantime Shirkuh had entered the country and crossed the Nile some forty miles south of Cairo. In a short time Amalric's army appeared on the opposite bank. After some maneuvering, during which both armies moved close to Cairo, Shirkuh retreated and the two armies met in battle at el Babein.

Here Shirkuh repeated the tactics of Nur ed-din at Harem. Saladin was placed in command of the cavalry in the center and, to make his force appear larger than it really was, the baggage was planted in the middle of his troops. Saladin's instructions were to give way after early resistance, then turn and fight his pursuers, leaving Shirkuh to engage the remainder of Amalric's forces in the absence of his cavalry. The event turned out as planned. When Amalric's soldiers came back from their engagement with Saladin they found their Egyptian allies running from Shirkuh, and themselves turned tail, abandoning their baggage and equipment. Thus Saladin had acquitted himself brilliantly in his first independent engagement.

However, Shirkuh did not feel strong enough to follow up the allied forces and turned north, entering Alexandria without opposition, where he left Saladin in command while he went skirmishing through the country. In the siege of Alexandria by Amalric and his Egyptian allies, lasting seventy-five days, the un-

willing nephew proved the wisdom of his uncle's insistence upon his joining him. With only a thousand men, in the midst of a population not at all interested in his success, and soon confronted with a lack of food as well as having to meet constant attacks from the enemy, the young commander showed his mettle. The spirit of the city was for surrender, and, only by instilling into the hearts of the masses a wholesome fear of what the Franks would do to them, was he able to keep down the tumult.

In the meantime he kept up a stout resistance, holding the walls against the battering engines of the besiegers, and waited for Shirkuh to come to his aid. Shirkuh was seeking to get Cairo, but the war ended on both sides with a stalemate, each claiming the victory. It was agreed that both armies should leave Egypt to the Egyptians, but Amalric evaded these terms by leaving his garrison in Cairo, and Shawer was still pledged to pay an annual tribute of one hundred thousand dinars. Shirkuh took away with him fifty thousand dinars. Shawer did not hesitate to spend the Egyptians' money to get rid of enemy and ally alike, realizing that the presence of either would in the long run prove fatal to his continuance in power. But even this only delayed the inevitable.

Amalric was the first to succumb to the temptation. It is said that Manuel, Emperor of Constantinople, whose grandniece became Amalric's second wife shortly after his return from Egypt, urged him to make the conquest and forestall Nur ed-din. The Grand

Hospitallers did the same, while the Knights Templars opposed such a flagrant breach of the recently made treaty. October, 1168, a little over a year after his quitting Egypt, saw Amalric back there, and in mid-November he appeared before the walls of Cairo. It should not have been difficult to take the city, but Shawer took advantage of the King's delay to open negotiations with Nur ed-din. In December Shirkuh was back and Amalric had to abandon the siege to meet him. The former managed to evade the King, who found the Egyptians against him because of his brutal massacre of the populations of towns captured by him, and he finally returned to Palestine to meet the ever mounting problems created by the Saracens there.

More than ever Saladin had resisted his uncle's determination to have him on his staff on this expedition, and only Nur ed-din's intervention had stilled his opposition. "By Allah," he is quoted as saying, "if the sovereignty of Egypt were offered me, I would not go." Strange words in the light of what happened. His excuse was his trying experience in Alexandria, a mere trifle compared to what he faced willingly over and over again in the years to come. Many terrible trials had been met and overcome when one day he turned to Beha ed-din and said: "Of all men, I was the one who least wished to accompany the expedition, and it was not of my own accord that I went with my uncle."

Shirkuh entered Cairo in triumph, amid the acclaim of the populace, who hailed him as a deliverer, and the

Caliph invested him with a robe of honor, which was the usual manifestation of a monarch's approval. Shirkuh promptly displayed his new dress before the eyes of the citizens, for the old fellow had a shrewd sense of politics and was determined that this time Shawer must be put in his place.

Little doubt that the fighting and more or less swaggering Kurd appealed to the average Egyptian, as he did at home. He had just enough of human failings to be thought a good fellow, and his parade through the crowded streets in the Caliph's robe of honor must have evoked quite a few malicious grins at the expense of the none too popular vizier. So, undoubtedly, did Shirkuh's treatment of the hitherto all powerful one. Everybody else waited upon the latter, but he had to do the calling when it came to Shirkuh. "On these occasions he used to come on horseback, with drums, trumpets and banners," but all this pomp did not disguise the true facts. Shirkuh was the conqueror as well as the savior of the country. And "then the claws of the Lion of the Faith fastened themselves upon Egypt," wrote Beha ed-din. Shirkuh's full name was Asad ed-din, hence the "Lion of the Faith."

It fell to Saladin's lot to put an end to the travesty of Shawer's nominal power. It became known to the Syrians that the vizier was again plotting treachery, and that this time he proposed to have Shirkuh and his staff seized at a banquet. So Saladin, accompanied by a few officers, rode out to meet him as he came to visit Shirkuh and made him prisoner. No sooner was

this fact known at the Palace than the Caliph sent Shirkuh a written request for the head of his recent master. Quite the usual routine in such cases, apparently, and off went the head, which was ceremoniously conveyed to the Caliph. One can see the latter, a swarthy young man, not overstrong and rather effeminate in manner, showing the gory thing to the ladies of his harem, and chuckling with them over this ending of one who had forced upon him many humiliations.

With a proper sense of gratitude, and due recognition of what the existing conditions demanded, the Caliph sent a vizier's robe to Shirkuh, who by this act was acknowledged as the successor to Shawer and virtual head of the government. So the general's ambition was achieved. He was now master of Egypt, with all its great resources. To be sure, his hold depended on the good will of Nur ed-din, but the latter was busy at home and would continue to be so a long time, whereas Egypt was not too accessible. Its ruler would be a vice regent, with all the practical powers and emoluments of royalty.

Shirkuh lost no time in making himself solid with the populace. Uncertain just how many might be adherents of Shawer, he had it proclaimed through the streets that the palace of the late vizier was at the disposition of the citizens for looting. At once, with wild huzzahs the rabble was off to do a thorough job. Not so much as a cushion remained in the palace at the close of the day.

All being now as his fondest hopes had desired, Shirkuh relaxed and gave himself up fully to the joys of the famous flesh-pots of Egypt. The cares of government he turned over to his trusted nephew, who seems to have handled them very well for one who was alleged to be a recluse and inexperienced in practical affairs. There is an intimation by one of the chroniclers that the young man had anticipated some such result, he being made to do all the work and bear all the responsibilities while his jolly uncle enjoyed himself and took unto himself the fame and the emoluments of his new rank.

However, this situation did not last long. Shirkuh had a weakness for the pleasures of the table which passed beyond reasonable bounds. His fondness for rich dishes led him to overeat, with the result that often he suffered from indigestion. Still he would not be advised, and finally outraged nature forced the penalty. Less than three months after he had been named Victorious King and Commander-in-Chief by the Caliph he succumbed to an unusually severe attack.

Now the fates made clear why they had constrained the unwilling youth of Damascus to accept the distasteful role forced upon him. No sooner had Shirkuh passed from the scene than Saladin was called to the Palace to be invested with the viziership by the Caliph. " It is strange," writes Ibn el-Athir, in an alleged quotation from the Prophet, " that to bring certain persons to Paradise it is necessary to drag them there in chains." Beha ed-din, quoting the Koran, pointed to

the passage reading, "Peradventure that ye hate a thing while it is good for you."

Certainly it seemed like one of those strange endings to an Arabian Night's tale which invariably evokes the exclamation, Kismet! A reluctant soldier becomes at thirty the successor to the Pharaohs!

CHAPTER EIGHT

AT GRIPS WITH THE ENVIOUS

It is alleged that at the last moment Saladin resisted the Caliph's wish to make him the successor of Shirkuh, and had to be coaxed and persuaded by ingenious arguments. There is no doubt that when he returned to the vizier's palace, clothed in the vizier's robe, and bearing the proud title of the Prince Defender, he had cause to wonder whether he had not made a mistake in allowing himself to be over-persuaded. Not one of the distinguished emirs who had served with him under his uncle was there to greet him, as ordinary politeness demanded. Their absence was significant of the opposition he was likely to meet with in his own camp. All of them had been candidates for the office, and none could condone the choice of the youngest among them, one moreover who had seen so little of war and had so little experience of affairs. It was even hinted, and may well have been so, that the choice had been dictated by the crafty Caliph's belief that this young and inexperienced man was the weakest of all those who might pretend to the honor. Both the Caliph and the emirs were mistaken, however; for the very lack of confidence and the opposi-

tion were just what were required to develop Saladin's character and put him upon his mettle. In those first lonely moments, when the insulting behavior of his companions in arms might have hardened another man into bitterness, and caused him to consider means of revenge, Saladin saw his problem clearly, and, crowding down his resentment, determined to meet it in wise forbearance.

Whatever were the motives which had caused him to hold back, he was ready now to meet the offerings of Fate. As has happened with many a great man before and since, inherent firmness and a readiness to abandon the little for the big were aroused by the crisis. A roseate vision of the future, extending far beyond the present promotion, splendid as that was, wiped the slate clean of all weaknesses and taste for self indulgence. Away with the little pleasures of the world, with wine and the follies born in the brain of youth when the flowing bowl has fired the blood and lulled the dictates of prudence. In his solitude he mapped out his course of conduct and braced himself to meet the emergency. A single error now might terminate the great career he saw opening before him. And his first step proved his ability to cope with his countrymen.

To have appealed to them directly would have been a sign of weakness which could only have fatal consequences. To attempt to force their allegiance would bring rebellion and endanger the supremacy of the Syrian power in Egypt. It was necessary to find an intermediary who would act as if upon his own initiative,

and his choice fell upon el Heccari, a wise lawyer who had come to Egypt in the train of Shirkuh. A truly oriental plan was devised and put into effect. One after the other of the big emirs was visited by the lawyer. First came Saif ed-din Ali ibn Ahmed.

"You never would have got it," said El Heccari, in mild remonstrance, "so long as A'in ed-Daula el-Yarouki and Ibn Telil were candidates."

The truth of this could not be disputed, so the first appeal was successful. Chechab ed-din el-Haremi, an uncle of Saladin, was the next in order. Said the lawyer flatly:

"Saladin is at the head of the kingdom. As he is the son of your sister you can regard this distinction which has come to him as your own. Anyhow, do not you be the first to seek to deprive him of his dignity, for never would it come to you."

This logic was accepted and forthwith the uncle called upon his nephew and pledged his loyalty. The triumphant attorney hastened on to Kotb ed-din.

"Everybody has accepted Saladin but you and El Yarouki," he protested, "yet there is a tie which should attach you to him. You are both Kurds and you cannot permit the control to pass to the Turcomans."

Another ten stroke, it would have seemed; but not in this case. El Yarouki proved adamant. He was too powerful, both because of his exalted position and the number of his following. The wily lawyer exerted all his eloquence and powers of persuasion to win him over, but the emir's jealous anger could not be appeased. Off

he went in high dudgeon with all his men, and a number of the lesser emirs were influenced by his example to desert, too. When they arrived at headquarters they met with severe criticism from Nur ed-din, which improved Saladin's position in the esteem of all Moslems.

In the meantime Saladin, ignoring the defections, put his house in order. Disbanding the motley and unreliable Egyptian troops, he organized a compact guard of his own Kurds, and at once started in with the liberal dispensing of gifts which marked his entire career. Civilians as well as soldiers were the beneficiaries of his largesse, and the large fortune left by his uncle was distributed on all sides. That many of his gifts were dictated by policy was undoubtedly true, but he had a perfect itch for giving, and many of the recipients of his bounty were poor scholars, poets and holy men from whom no definite return could be expected.

In remarkably short time his rule was definitely established. Envious rivals ceased to smirk at the young subaltern raised over the heads of his elders. The Caliph and his partisans woke up to find that the supposedly weakest of his conquerors was not only a master among men but the master of his rivals. There was much concealed fury as well as chagrin in the discovery, and conspiracy — almost the daily diet of the Palace — was presently at work. The plan was to maneuver Saladin into some part of the country where a new alliance of the Caliph and the Franks might overwhelm his comparatively small force.

But Saladin was no dreamer. His agents were busy,

after the example of Malek Shah, and the plans of the conspirators were revealed long before they could be put into effect. Their leader, the chief eunuch of the Palace, was caught at his summer house and promptly beheaded. All the negroes in the official life of Cairo, some fifty thousand, rose in open revolt, and there was fierce fighting in the open square between the Palace of the Caliph and that of the new Vizier, before the rebels were defeated. The echoes of this affair were to last some years and were heard in various parts of the country. After repeated severe punishments the blacks, too, decided they had found their master and ceased to agitate.

Long before the rumblings of official recalcitrance had ceased, Saladin was deep in his ultimate purpose. The vision which had inspired him to overcome the defection of the emirs was expanding day by day. The control of Egypt soon became a minor matter. Already he saw himself moving on to a larger destiny. Somebody would have to carry on the splendid work of Zenghi and Nur ed-din, somebody whose personal ambition would be merged in the greater ambition to reclaim the patrimony of the Moslems and to plant the banner of the Prophet in all the holy places of Islam. And where was this heir to the mighty unless, indeed, it should turn out that he was the selected of God?

Something of this far-seeing vision may have become apparent to Nur ed-din, still very much in the flesh, and hacking away continuously at the Franks, for his manner of addressing the new Vizier, as well as

his general attitude towards him, indicated a suspicion that he believed him to be getting out of hand. The old fighter had no desire to see his work taken up by an outsider. Though fighting the infidel was his object in life, and though he put that above all personal ambitions, still he was human enough to wish to keep the leadership in his own family and to conserve his conquest for his natural successors. This young Joseph (Yusuf), son of Job, might be, and undoubtedly was, fit for great leadership, but why should he turn over to a stranger the mantle of authority won by the blood and sweat of years of unremitting effort?

So, when his communications reached Saladin they were addressed to him and "all the other Emirs who are in Egypt," and, though he was recognized as the Emir el Isfahselar, or the Emir Commander-in-Chief, this was distinctly made to appear as Nur ed-din's commander-in-chief. Nothing in act or word of Saladin justified any doubt of his whole-hearted allegiance. In the Khotba, the Friday prayer in which the beneficence of Allah was invoked in the mosques for the Caliph and the actual ruler of the land, it was always Nur ed-din's name, and not his own, which appeared. Moreover, whenever occasion offered the Vizier declared publicly that in all he was doing he was acting only as the lieutenant of his master, Nur ed-din.

But Nur ed-din was not the only one who suspected that these words were not to be taken at their surface value. Both the supporters of Saladin and his enemies seemed to see his tongue in his cheek even as they were

spoken, and the naïve assertion of Beha ed-din years later would suggest that there was foundation for this. "I have heard him say," reported Saladin's biographer, " 'When God allowed me to obtain possession of Egypt with so little trouble, I understood that He purposed to grant me the conquest of the Sahel, for He himself implanted the thought in my mind.' " That was a confession that even from the first his imagination had been fired by the ambition to possess himself of the places possessed by the Franks along the Syrian coast, which was Nur ed-din's purpose also.

The Saladin of later years, marvel of self-restraint and patience, had not fully emerged from the chrysalis stage. Extraordinary for his years and slight experience of human affairs, but not yet the great master. The Saladin to be would have shaped his conduct towards Nur ed-din with a surer hand. He would not have been afraid of him. He would not have run away from him. This occurred twice, once when he was besieging Esh-Shobek, a fortress which commanded the desert route from Syria to Egypt and had proved annoying to Moslem caravans. The siege was progressing when he heard that Nur ed-din proposed to march from Damascus to join with him. His excuse for not waiting for his lord was the discovery of another conspiracy in Egypt, but he had provided against this and his brothers were there to see his plans put into force. The second time he was again attacking a fortress of the Franks, this one even a greater menace to the desert trade and the pilgrimages to Mecca. El Kerak

was to engage his attention many times. It was a place of great strength and well defended. Saladin attacked it upon orders from Nur ed-din, and it was understood the latter would come to his aid, so Saladin must finally have prevailed over his fears; but, when the test came, he deserted again.

This time it was an accident to Ayub which was put forward as his excuse, and in fact the former was dead before Saladin could reach Cairo. It was a great loss as well as cause for real grief. Unlike Shirkuh, Ayub had a cool head and a wise one. Only a short time before he had undoubtedly saved his son from a great error.

Following the retreat from Esh-Shobek, Nur ed-din had determined to come to grips with his lieutenant, and the air was full of his proposed invasion of Egypt. At a council of the family of Saladin and his tried supporters an imprudent young relative had boldly proposed defiance, and for a moment Saladin seemed to waver; but Ayub, as alert as he was discreet, quickly squelched the young man.

"I am thy father," he said, turning to Saladin, "and here is Shihab ed-din, thy mother's brother. Bethink thee, is there one in this assembly who loves thee and desires thy welfare as we do?" "No, by Allah!" returned Saladin. "Know then," Ayub went on, "that if I and thine uncle were to meet Nur ed-din, nothing could stop our dismounting and kissing the ground at his feet. Even should he bid us cut off thy head with the sword, we should do it. From this judge what

others would do. All whom thou seest here, and all the troops must needs do homage to Nur ed-din, should he come. This land is his, and if he should depose thee, we must instantly obey. This, therefore, is my counsel: Write to him and say, 'News has reached me that thou dost intend to lead an expedition to this country. But what need is there for this? Let my lord but send hither a courier on a dromedary, to lead me to thee by a turban around my neck. No one here will offer to resist.' "

Wily Ayub! When the meeting broke up — and he was careful to make another little speech for publication, in which he stressed the fact that they were all but the slaves and chattels of their master, Nur ed-din — he scolded Saladin for not having anticipated his declaration, and for permitting his ambition to be seen by the others, many of whom only waited the opportunity to betray him. Then the warrior in him spoke up, letting his real feelings reveal themselves. "By Allah!" he declared, "if Nur ed-din attempted to take but a sugar cane of ours, myself should fight him to the death."

The counsel was followed and proved efficient. Nur ed-din pretended to believe the protestations of subordination and the Vizier was left in peace. The fact was that Nur ed-din found plenty to occupy him in his own dominion, and was not overanxious to leave this exposed to attack while he was away.

Before the feeling between him and Saladin had come to this pass there had been one important time

of co-operation. Amalric, alarmed by the menace of Moslem possession of Egypt, had secured the aid of a fleet from the Greek Emperor, and probably the secret offer of help from the Egyptian malcontents, and proceeded to besiege Damietta. When Saladin appealed for aid to Nur ed-din the latter promptly sent troops, and Amalric's design was defeated. Ibn el-Athir, gleefully quoting an Arab proverb, wrote that "the ostrich set out to find itself horns, and returned without ears." The Greek fleet had been sadly wrecked and Amalric's army badly punished. It turned out to be more than a mere repulse, for thereafter the Crusaders were almost continuously on the defensive.

Events moved decisively in Saladin's favor from now on. Taking the offensive on the Syrian frontier, plundering a number of the places belonging to the Franks and capturing others, he strengthened his reputation among the Egyptians, who now became so enthusiastic in his support that he was encouraged to throw off all allegiance to the Caliph and come out openly for the Abbasid Caliph of Bagdad. Both Nur ed-din and he belonged to this religious party, and neither had been happy in the nominal allegiance to the heretical Shiites. In fact, Nur ed-din had urged throwing off this pretense long before, but Saladin was undoubtedly well advised in biding his time. Even at the last it seemed a doubtful step, but the saying of the Khotba in the name of the Bagdad Caliph provoked no more than a murmur of surprise.

El Adid Abu Muhammed Abd-Allah, the last of the

Egyptian Caliphs, never knew of his deposition. He was ill at the time and the news was kept from him at Saladin's express order. "If he recover," said he, "he will learn the truth soon enough; if not, let him die in peace." Three days after the ecclesiastical revolution the Caliph died, still in blessed ignorance, leaving four wives and eleven sons, beside many other relatives. The lot of them were immured in the palace by the order of Saladin's trusted agent, and, though they were accorded all the luxuries to which they had been accustomed, their further increase was checked by separating the men from the women.

It is pleasant to note that already Saladin's kindliness was becoming a subject of comment. He had refused to heed a request for his personal attendance from the dying Caliph, suspecting this might be another plot to seize his person, but when he was convinced that the Caliph had been moved by a real desire to see him, he openly expressed remorse at not having complied with the request, and spoke in praise of the Caliph's gentleness and other good qualities. Considering how many plots against his very life, as well as government, had proceeded from the Palace, this surely was magnanimous.

El-Adid died Sept. 13, 1171. There was therefore no longer any opposition to be feared in Egypt. The dispensing of large sums from the treasure left by the Caliph among the emirs, the soldiers and the citizens, helped greatly to increase Saladin's popularity, and his foraging expeditions added largely to his prestige.

TABLET COMMEMORATING SALADIN'S FOUNDATION OF THE CITADEL AT CAIRO

The treasure was enormous, not only in gold, but in jewels.

For centuries the choicest gems of the Orient, gathered in the colonies in Asia Minor, in Africa and Spain, as well as in Egypt, had been deposited in the caskets of the Caliphs. The romancers responsible for the Arabian Nights could not picture the brilliance and the artistry of some of these rare pieces. Ibn el-Athir speaks of an emerald " one and one half times the size of a hand." Without asking whose hand, or how this could possibly have been set in a ring, as alleged, the character of some of these jewels may be believed to have been beyond anything existing today, even among the richest of crown jewels.

In May, 1174 Nur ed-din died. With that event the way was clear for Saladin to enter upon his far-reaching plans. Although he still asserted his devotion to the house of his former chief, and the name of the latter's son, el-Melek es-Saleh Ism'ail appeared in the Khotba delivered throughout Egypt, it could not have been meant for long continuance. The lion being gone, the whelp could not be considered seriously. But it would not do to say as much just yet. There were too many jealous rivals in the strongholds of Syria, and some would go so far as to make common cause with the Franks if necessary to thwart his supremacy. So he must still bide his time, though he could pave the way for the future.

In the fall of the same year there was another attempt on Egypt by the Franks. This had been meant to

be in co-operation with the final uprising of the negroes, in combination with some disaffected Turcomans, but the plot was revealed again and crushed ruthlessly. Hearing of this the Franks of Palestine did not move, but the King of Sicily came with a fleet to Alexandria, where he landed troops. For a short time it looked as though he might overcome the small resisting force, but the news that Saladin was on his way with large reinforcements inspired the garrison to a vigorous sortie and the Sicilians were definitely defeated.

This victory was not without effect at home and abroad. Taken with conquests in the Soudan and in Arabia, where his eldest brother, Turan Shah, had won sweeping victories even before the death of Nur ed-din, it was made clear to all that a new sun had risen in Islam. Already he was Sultan of Egypt, and all indications were that Humphrey of Toron's Moslem Knight was in full gallop towards an imperial crown.

CHAPTER NINE

ENTRY INTO SYRIA

DISSENSION among the leading emirs of Damascus resulted in some of these sending an invitation to Saladin to come and rescue that city from the threatened domination of Gumishtikin S'ad ed-din, Emir of Mosul and guardian of es-Saleh, both of whom were then in Aleppo. It required no second urging. The Sultan, looking for just such an opportunity to enter into Syrian politics, did not even stop for an efficient escort. There must be no delay to permit of a change of heart on the part of the petitioners. With but seven hundred chosen horsemen he took the risk of being caught by the Franks as he emerged from the desert and arrived before the gates of Damascus long before he was expected. There was no opposition to his entry. On the contrary, he received a royal welcome in the city of his youth, and went at once to his old home.

Conditions in Syria and in Palestine were almost identical at this moment. Through the death of Amalric the throne of Jerusalem had descended to a mere boy, Baldwin IV, who was moreover a leper. While Raymond of Tripoli had been selected to be governor in his name, there were cliques and jealousies among the other Christian lords which practically paralyzed

all concerted effort. Had this not been so, there might well have been danger for the Moslems of Syria, for they, too, were at odds with each other, the more powerful among the emirs being out, each for himself, in rivalry for the succession to the power and the estates of Nur ed-din and Zenghi.

Saladin had not left them in doubt as to his position. Ibn el Athir quoted a letter sent to the rival chiefs of Damascus, in which Saladin declared flatly that Nur ed-din would not have chosen him to be his agent in Egypt had he not intended him to be his successor in leadership — always, of course, in behalf of his son and heir. He claimed as his right the guardianship of es-Saleh, and the protection of his person and property, and there was no question after his arrival in Damascus that he meant to assert this right by force of arms if necessary.

Beyond that there had been the threat of punishment for those emirs who had been false to their trust. Nominally this meant their duty to the young King, but the emirs knew well enough the real meaning. Some of them had been treating with the Franks, accepting bribes or paying tribute for aid against their Moslem opponents. This traffic between the common enemy and those of his faith for personal ends always aroused his fierce wrath and scorn. He had far more tolerance for the non-believer than for the backslider among his own, and this traffic was in his eyes equivalent to treachery to God and His Prophet.

Having intensified the devotion of the Damascans

by lavish distribution of money, he set out at once upon the arrival of troops from Egypt for the subjection of those places which were under the control of the lords of Aleppo and Mosul, where lay the heart of the opposition. Emesa, Hamah and other cities surrendered without fighting, but when he reached Aleppo, where his nominal sovereign was staying with Gumishtikin, the gates were closed and the walls were manned with soldiers.

Es-Saleh was only twelve, but he appears to have had a mind of his own and to have been self-possessed far beyond his years. Had he been allowed to develop under normal circumstances in a favorable environment his chances of holding his inheritance would have been quite different. Upon the approach of Saladin, who had evidently been made to appear to him as another were-wolf, the boy mounted his horse and riding into the public square of Aleppo appealed to the people for protection.

"You know what was the kindness of my father towards you," he said, while the tears streamed down his cheeks. "I am your ward. And now comes this unjust man, who denies the favors my father did for him, to seize my city. He has no regard for the rights of God or man."

A remarkably grown-up speech for a youngster, but it had the desired effect. First the people wept with him, then they took up their weapons and fought so well that Saladin decided the time was not ripe and went off for easier prey.

Possessed neither by pride nor blood lust, the occasional rebuff meant little to him. There was but one goal and the easiest way to reach this was also the wisest, even though it might be longer and take more time. Above all, it would be a serious mistake to destroy Moslem cities, and therewith Moslem prosperity, or to shed unnecessarily Moslem blood. Both of these must be conserved as far as possible for the greater design. So the army of conquest moved about from place to place, annexing whatever could be taken easily, and only fighting when forced to, but then so fiercely and powerfully that the lesson would not be overlooked.

So it was that when the combined forces of Mosul and Aleppo came seeking him near the Horns of Hamah, he suggested a compromise, even offering to surrender some of his conquests. But his opponents, having the larger force and feeling confident of victory, rejected his proposals with scorn. They did not reckon with his superior military talents. When the battle finally came it was with the opposing forces maneuvered into positions according to his wishes. This time there could be no dallying with Fate, no holding back the sword for policy or otherwise. Caught in a ravine between the soldiers of Damascus and those of Egypt, the men of Aleppo and Mosul were cut to pieces and pursued as far as Aleppo, where a truce was arranged which left Saladin master of all the territory once possessed by Nur ed-din in Syria, excepting Aleppo and its immediate dependencies.

This ended all further pretense of allegiance to es-Saleh. The unfortunate young king was the loser by siding with Gumishtikin, whose disinterestedness was disproved later, when es-Saleh found it necessary to cut off his head to regain his freedom. Saladin was now proclaimed King of Syria as well as Sultan of Egypt, and the gold coins minted at Cairo thereafter bore the legend: "The King Strong to Aid, Joseph Son of Job: Exalted Be the Standard."

It was usual, when a new monarch arrived, for the Caliph at Bagdad to legitimize his pretensions in an elaborate ceremony. It was an empty form, for the Caliph had no real power, and when a conqueror appeared his bidding could not be resisted. Often he would have refused his seal of approval had he dared, but the time had passed when the veto of the Caliph could halt the successful warrior.

The ceremony took place in the palace at Bagdad, which could not be improved upon for dramatic effectiveness. The Caliph sat upon his golden throne, surrounded by his court, and, as the monarch appeared before him, the successor to the Prophet would descend from his throne and go forward to meet him. The black veil of the Abbasides covered the holy man's head, the mantle of Mahomet his shoulders, in his hands rested the baton of the Prophet, around his neck hung suspended a copy of the Koran.

With his own hands he placed upon the royal body five or six vests of honor, one upon the other, swathed his form in a robe of cloth of gold, fastened two swords

at his side and fitted the crown upon his head. A grand affair, of course, followed by appropriate feasts for all concerned and cheers from the multitude when royalty departed. Besides being the custom, it probably flattered the vanity of the new potentate and also served the practical purpose of impressing his people and advertising his glory.

Saladin had no time for empty ceremonial just then, and did not even think of visiting Bagdad, but the Caliph sent his written sanction, together with the various appropriate articles. They reached Saladin at Hamah in the spring of 1175 and may have had some effect upon unsettled emirs.

A year went by, with Saladin organizing the administration of his territories, and then Seif ed-din, Prince of Mosul, thought the time ripe for another test of arms. Again in alliance with the men of Aleppo, he advanced to meet the army of Saladin. Only good fortune, and the ineptitude of the leaders of the enemy saved the latter this time, for his men were dispersed watering their horses while he with a small escort had pushed forward to a place known as the Turcoman's Well. Had an attack been delivered immediately the chances were all in favor of the allies, but for some unexplained reason they delayed until the next day, when Saladin had his men disposed according to his plans.

For a time the decision seemed to be against him. A dashing leader, the Lord of Arbela, known as Kukburi, who afterwards came over to Saladin and

became his brother-in-law, led a furious charge that drove back Saladin's left flank, and not until Saladin in person led a counter-charge was the danger overcome. Seif ed-din barely escaped, and many of his most prominent officers were taken prisoners.

The victory was even greater than it seemed, for Saladin was so generous in his treatment of the prisoners that these returned to their homes full of praise for him. Not a few of them had gifts to show, and many of the wounded owed their recovery to his tender care of them. When these recovered quite a few enlisted under his banner. It was a triumph of skilful publicity as well as diplomacy and the tidings were spread where they had the greatest effect. Nor were his own soldiers neglected.

Seif ed-din had had no time to gather up his belongings and the spoils were large. All these were distributed among the officers and men. There followed the siege and capture of many cities and strongholds, including Membij and the Castle of Azaz, which he gave some time thereafter to a young daughter of Nur ed-din, in a generous impulse, of which more will be told later.

Sieges were conducted practically in the same manner by both Saracen and Frank. The mangonel or trebuchet was a machine which threw missiles over the walls and sometimes had a battering ram attached. Usually a number of mangonels were employed at the same time in different places. Their efficiency can be judged from the fact that at one of the later sieges one

stone hurled from a mangonel killed twelve men within the city walls. The besieged used them also, and at the famous siege of Acre a troublesome mangonel called by the Franks, "The Bad Neighbor," was put out of commission by a similar engine called by the Saracens, in the same facetious spirit, "The Bad Kinsman."

There were other contrivances, usually of wickerwork protected from fire by rawhides soaked in vinegar, which were moved on wheels, and sheltered the men while they filled up the moat with stones and earth to enable the besiegers to get up to the walls. This arrangement was called a sow or testudo. Finally there was a wooden tower of varying heights, but usually higher than the walls to be attacked, which also moved on wheels, worked from within, on different stories of which were mangonels, battering rams and soldiers armed with bows and arrows. These also were protected with rawhide against Greek fire and flaming arrows used by the besieged. War engines of offense had not developed to any great degree since the days of Rome.

Saladin often applied sapping methods to the walls, and used fire against the stones to weaken and dislodge them. Rich rewards were offered to those who would exert themselves the most and assume the greatest risks. The same methods were used by Richard of England and other leaders of the Crusaders. Many apparently impregnable fortresses, protected by huge walls and seemingly inaccessible locations, were taken

by what would now appear to be ludicrously inadequate aids to man-power.

After the capture of Azaz Saladin returned to Aleppo and attacked this so vigorously that the defenders came to terms. A treaty recognizing the validity of his conquests was agreed to on July 29, 1176 and this was maintained for six years. In September he was back in Egypt, engaged in strengthening the walls of Cairo and making many other improvements, including the building of colleges and hospitals. A whole year passed in this work and then he set out to punish the Franks for raiding his territories in violation of a truce arranged with the King of Jerusalem.

It was a campaign entered into with perfect confidence, for this time he took along adequate forces, including eight thousand of his fighting mamelukes and eighteen thousand blacks, and for a time all went as planned. Far and wide through Palestine went the army in almost frolicsome abandon, plundering and devastating up to the very gates of Jerusalem. Then, suddenly, on November 25, 1177, the combined forces of the Christians caught him off his guard near Ramleh. Most of the army was away and Saladin had only his bodyguard to protect him. He tried to get his men into fighting order and succeeded at first in presenting some defense, but the enemy were too strong. In the worst defeat of his career he escaped himself only by good fortune, and, mounted on a swift camel, raced across the desert, practically unattended. Of the splendid army which had moved out of Egypt with him so

gaily only a few survivors returned after many hardships.

A terrible reverse, but evidently it did not affect his spirits once he was back in safety. Writing to his brother, Turan Shah, whom he had left in control of Damascus, he declared, in a manner unusually florid for him:

"I thought of thee while the lances were agitated in our midst and the javelins of brown iron quenched their thirst with our blood."

Perhaps it was a bit of bravura to show the elder brother, who doubtless had lorded it over him in the days when he was still only little Joseph, that he had not been shaken by his fearful experience.

However, the defeat did not hold him back from meeting the enemy for long. Within three months he crossed over into Syria with a new army and soon there were skirmishes between his troops and the Franks, while he with the main army remained encamped near Emesa. Undoubtedly his defeat must have rankled somewhat for he ordered a number of prisoners beheaded, which was quite unlike his usual clemency.

After a number of successful smaller encounters, during one of which King Baldwin barely escaped, and this only because the gallant Humphrey of Toron sacrificed his own life to save him, the two armies came together in June, 1178, near Banias. Once again the Franks seemed to have a victory secure, with the Saracens in flight and hotly pursued. But the pursuers

went too far, especially Odo of St. Amand and his Knights Templar, and the watchful eye of Saladin, ever on the alert, even in the most perilous moments, for the surprise which overwhelms, saw the opportunity to turn upon the widely spread out enemy. Again leading one of his furious dashes, as he had at the battle with Seif ed-din, he charged the unprepared enemy who, thinking the day won, had encumbered themselves with the baggage left behind by the Saracens. The Franks were thoroughly routed, many were killed and many taken prisoners. The rest were in headlong flight. Seventy of the most notable knights were brought to Saladin's tent, among them the overconfident Odo, Raymond of Tripoli, Balian of Ibelin, Baldwin of Ibelin and Ramleh, Hugh of Tiberias and the Master of the Hospitallers.

Two months later Saladin captured Castle Jacob, which King Baldwin had restored recently, against the protests of Saladin, as it commanded a plain which had long been regarded as neutral ground, where the flocks of the rival nations had been wont to graze alongside each other while their shepherds fraternized. Saladin had offered a large sum to induce the King to desist, but without avail.

In the attack on this stronghold was illustrated the methods already described of forcing a seemingly impregnable fortress. The Saracens dug a mine under the wall and filled it with burning wood, expecting the expansion caused by the heat to force out some of the stones, but these were so thick and heavy the flames

had no effect. Thereupon Saladin offered a piece of gold for every skin of water brought there. Soon he had enough to flood the mine, after which it was deepened, the wall was pierced and a new fire started, which had the desired result.

These two defeats, combined with a dearth of food caused by a long-continued drought, and the growing illness of the leper King, caused the latter to ask for a truce, and Saladin was not loath to agree, for his dominions too had suffered from the lack of moisture. In the summer of 1180 a two years' truce by land and sea was solemnly entered into. That same year Saladin arranged a general peace, to which all the Moslem princes and the King of Armenia were parties. This also was for two years. Then he went back to Egypt, where he remained for two years.

A number of important events in the meantime made the situation in Syria and Mesopotamia of more than passing interest to him. Seif ed-din died and Masud was his successor at Mosul. Even more important was the death of es-Saleh, whether of colic or poison was not determined, and here, too, Masud was named to succeed. Moreover, a number of the Frankish princes were violating the treaty. However, Saladin made no move, and perhaps nothing indicates the character of the man more clearly than this refusal to break his word, no matter what the provocation.

Throughout Saladin's entire career a treaty meant for him just what it said and never once was he led into breaking it. Not that he overlooked the bad faith

of his opponents; but his monumental patience could not be exhausted. When the time came he would make the payment doubly dear — as Reginald of Chatillon, who had gone so far as to attack a caravan of harmless merchants and pilgrims notwithstanding the truce, was to learn. As also, those princes of Moslem faith who were conspiring again with the Franks, this time in contemplation of a united attack upon him, now regarded as the supreme common enemy.

On May 11th Saladin returned to Syria, not to take action but to be on the scene. His departure from Egypt was marked by a dramatic incident which for some time was magnified far beyond its importance. The whole world over superstition and belief in the supernatural held sway over even the clearest minds and Saladin, enlightened though he was in most respects, was not superior to his times and environment in this respect. Moreover, it was part of his faith to believe in the djinns, both good and bad, and their intervention in the affairs of men. They are mentioned in various places in the Koran itself. There were even many Moslems who believed in a mysterious body of men called Abdul who, having led holy lives on earth, were permitted after death to intervene in the matters of this world. Astrologers always accompanied his army and consulted the stars before any important action.

The night before he left Cairo there was a gathering of notables and friends at the Palace to bid the Sultan farewell. There was a general entertainment, with

music and the reading of poetry written for the occasion, and all was going merrily when the teacher of one of Saladin's children came forward unexpectedly and recited a verse of his own creation, of which the refrain was:

"Enjoy for the last time the perfume exhaled by the violets of Nedjid:

"This night passed, there will be no more violets."

Saladin was strangely affected. His countenance, radiant only a moment earlier, became clouded and melancholy. All present were seized with sudden premonitions of evil. Had some djinn inspired the young man to utter his gloomy prophecy?

Saladin never saw Egypt again.

CHAPTER TEN

THE OLD MAN OF THE MOUNTAINS

IF EVER a man had reason to believe in his lucky star it would seem to have been Saladin at this time. Twice the malignant and fearful Old Man of the Mountains had tried to snuff out his life after his peculiar and sinister methods, and twice he had failed. This was little short of miraculous. Not often had the Assassins missed their objective. From the very beginning of this terrible organization it had been able to work its will even against the mightiest. The clever and powerful Nizam ul Mulk, one time friend and supporter of the founder of this fanatical body, was also one of its earliest victims. Even the master, the great Sultan Malek Shah, was believed to have died from poison administered by an Assassin.

Assassin is derived from hashashin, one who uses the juice of the leaves of hemp, a powerful drug; and they seemed to know much of poisons. Poison and dagger were equally favorite means for disposing of those who fell under the ban of the Grand Master of the order. Not infrequently the two were combined.

Now and then some intrepid prince had made an attempt to punish these agents of murder, among them

Nur ed-din, but his efforts had only been mocked at, as all others had been futile. Fearless as Nur ed-din had shown himself on a hundred fields of battle, he had no stomach to pursue his aggression after the first response from the terrible sheik. A note of warning pinned to his pillow by a poisoned dagger will cool the ardor of the bravest.

"If thou dost not decamp by this coming night," threatened the fearful missive, "this poniard will be plunged into thy belly."

There was an insolent tone in all the Sheik's communications, the accent of the bully convinced of his omnipotence. In response to one foray of Nur ed-din's troops came this:

"To threaten us with war is to threaten to throw a duck into water. The pigeon wishes to defy the eagle! Thou makest pretense to cut off my head and pull down my citadels. Fallacious hopes! Vain reveries! . . ."

It was understood Nur ed-din was planning another incursion into the gloomy retreat of the Assassins when he died.

There was reason to believe that the first attempt on Saladin's life was inspired by the vizier, Gumishtikin, for it came shortly after the former's first move on Aleppo. A number of the cut-throats gained access to the Sultan's camp without difficulty, but they were recognized by an emir named Khamartikin, Prince of the Castle of Abou-Kobais, which was close to the territory of the Assassins.

"Who brought you here and why have you come?" asked the Prince, who must have been extraordinarily naïve not to have realized their presence meant mischief.

Their only answer was a dagger thrust, which wounded him severely, and the next instant they were in Saladin's tent. Fortunately, there was help at hand, and they were seized before they could get at him. However, they managed to kill quite a few of his attendants before they could be overcome. Six months later, when Saladin was seated in his tent alone, a man slunk beneath the canvas unnoticed and actually landed a blow upon the Sultan's head which would have ended his career, had the point of the knife not been caught in the cap of mail he wore under his tarboosh.

Saladin caught the fellow's wrist but, being unable to rise, could not prevent his continuing to shower blows upon him with his free hand. Trained in the art of murder, the assailant's dagger was directed with skill and certainty. The aim was for the Sultan's throat, and struck there unerringly, but again it was deflected, this time by the coat of armor he fortunately wore this day beneath his tunic. The Sultan's cries brought aid, and one of his captains seized the knife and held it, though it cut his fingers, until the desperado succumbed to the blows rained upon him.

But the end was not yet. He had hardly fallen before another wild-eyed murderer was in the tent and fighting desperately to get at Saladin in spite of his

guard. Death alone terminated this crazy effort. With two despatched, the peril seemed removed, and all breathed freely again, but they were mistaken. Outside the tent a third emissary of the Sheik was lurking, hoping to find them off their guard. He, too, dashed in presently, but was caught and despatched before he could reach the Sultan.

For once the latter was panic-stricken. The dauntless warrior, who could lead a desperate attack upon an outnumbering foe and look upon the varying fortunes of bloody battles with a clear eye and serene brow, was overwhelmed for the moment by the suddenness of the attack and the utter fearlessness and cunning of his assailants. What was the value of guards and sentinels if murderers could come thus to his tent unopposed? An inquiry was opened at once, and its results did not serve to lessen the cause for apprehension. These three assailants had been received into his bodyguard, the force composed of chosen warriors, whose individual records were supposed to have been thoroughly searched and their trustworthiness established. Saladin had the guard summoned and scanned every face, dismissing all he did not recognize personally, but even then he did not feel safe.

The entire world was in terror of the Assassins, and well it might be. From their fastnesses in the mountains of Lebanon the wielders of poisoned daggers and deadly drugs had made their way wherever they wished, carrying death to all condemned by their

awful master. Almost as terrifying as their physical menace was the fearful mystery with which they surrounded themselves. Something more than human ruthlessness and cunning seemed to be behind their successful penetration of the most carefully guarded places, and more than human courage and bravado must account for the fearless facing of death and torture by these instruments of organized murder. Nor could any outsider understand the methods which permitted them to change their appearance and assume any disguise at will.

Marco Polo, describing the organization nearly a century later, gives what sounds like a plausible explanation of the desperate performances of its agents. In a beautiful valley high up in the mountains had been built a charming garden, containing the choicest fruit trees and the most fragrant shrubs. Here were constructed splendid palaces, adorned and furnished in the most elegant and elaborate fashion. Cunningly devised conduits conducted streams of purest water, of wine and milk and honey from these palaces into the garden, thus improving upon the biblical description of a prosperous land.

But all this was only a small part of the attractiveness of this retreat. A true sybarite the inventor of this elysium, and possessed of a mighty imagination. Its sole inhabitants were beautiful damsels, not only lovely to the eye, but trained in all the arts and accomplishments which may intensify the incitement of beauty. They could sing, they could play on all sorts

of musical instruments, they could dance. Beyond all these accomplishments they were skilled particularly in the arts of "dalliance and amorous allurement." Attractively costumed, they spent their days amusing themselves in their garden, while their female guardians and attendants remained out of sight.

The purpose of this elaborate enterprise was to provide the equivalent of the Paradise peopled with fascinating nymphs promised by Mahomet to the faithful, and to this Paradise were brought selected ones of the young men of the vicinity, chosen after their demonstration of unusual physical fitness and courage. Daily these listened to eloquent discourses upon the marvelous powers of their Sheik, in which the latter was represented as another reincarnation of the Deity and consequently entitled to implicit obedience.

However, it was not by words alone that the terrible discipline of these young votaries had been achieved. When sufficiently impressed with the teaching they would receive a dose of the hemp juice, after which they were conveyed to the palaces. Awakening from their stupor to find themselves surrounded by beauty, both animate and inanimate, served with the most delicious viands and the richest wines, charmed by sweet music and scaling the heights of ecstasy in the arms of the enchantresses, small wonder that these innocent rustics of the mountains believed they had actually been permitted to enter the Paradise described by the Prophet. When, after some days of this sensual rapture, they awakened from another drug-

ging to find themselves back in the bleak homeland, they were naturally eager to return to the heavenly delights. So they would, they were told, provided they proved themselves worthy by demonstration of their perfect readiness to obey. What if they should meet with death in the performance of the orders of the Sheik? That would mean no more than the granting of their desire, only then their bliss would be eternal.

The extent to which this teaching had been absorbed was illustrated in the experience of a visitor to their fastnesses who was being shown about by the Sheik in person. In one of the defiles of the mountains this visitor saw a sentinel perched upon a ledge of rock high above them. His eager, watchful manner indicated how closely he was observing their movements. Suddenly the Sheik, who appeared to have been oblivious of him, waved with his hand, and, without an instant's hesitation, the man plunged headlong into the valley, landing a mass of broken bones and bleeding flesh at the feet of the Master.

After due reflection Saladin decided he could not continue to be dependent upon good fortune alone to escape the threat against his life, and led his army into the mountains. His declared purpose was to put an end to the Old Man and all his tribe. No entirely trustworthy record of what ensued exists, but there are various accounts to explain the issue. One declared that Sinan, the Sheik at that time, prevailed upon the Sultan's maternal uncle to intervene in his behalf

upon his promise of good behavior, at the same time threatening the lives of Saladin's family and those of his generals, if he did not desist. Another, and far more picturesque explanation, has some features which show at least an original mind. The supernatural features may be taken or discarded, according to one's disposition in such matters.

Saladin had laid waste a large part of Sinan's territory, and had advanced to the high and solitary mountain peak on which was perched his castle, but had been unable to take this. Sinan was not there at the time, but Saladin's messenger found him with two of his aids at a village not far away. The messenger advanced upon the Sheik with the air of contempt natural in one who bears a summons to abject surrender. But, all of a sudden, the messenger is overwhelmed. The Sheik appears enveloped in an effulgent light of dazzling splendor. Never has the trembling emissary looked upon such resplendent majesty or invincible force as is registered in the countenance of the terrible Old Man of the Mountains. More and more these augment as the abashed messenger gazes spellbound. He can neither advance nor retreat, can only mumble words of contrition, and begs the Master to permit him to enter his service. But the latter will have none of him. He must return at once to the Sultan and relate what he has witnessed.

"Say to him," orders the Sheik, with a Mephistophelian manner, "that if he wishes to come to find me, he may. I have with me only two men, whom thou

seest. If he does not come, I will myself come to him, and that tomorrow."

Such is the relation of one friendly to the Sheik, and he goes on to tell how the Sultan declined the Old Man's invitation, regarding it as a trap. Sinan then went to the top of a nearby mountain, accompanied by his two aids, whereupon Saladin stationed troops around the base, expecting to capture all three. But when the soldiers, led by some fifty of his " emirs and men of mark," were ordered to advance up the mountain they found themselves unable to move. A numbing force controlled their limbs and held them powerless. The Sultan tried unarmed messengers, but they too found their efforts unavailing against the unseen power.

Saladin was greatly disturbed by the reports of his agents. Some magic power must surely be working for this foe, who claimed, indeed, to be an incarnation of the Deity. While Saladin would not accept this, he was not so certain that here was not a personification of the Evil Spirit. A doubt of his ability, being merely human after all, to master one supported by supernatural forces arose in his perplexed mind.

Still, he did not give way at once. To detect attempts to enter his tent in the night he had powdered chalk and ashes strewn around it, torches were given to the guards, and the latter changed frequently. Nevertheless, his sleep was uneasy and he was oppressed by a conviction that he was surrounded by the unseen agents of his maleficent enemy.

One night the sentinels saw a strange light appear upon the mountain retreat of the Sheik. Presently it was gliding like a wraith down its side to be lost among their tents. Then Saladin, awaking from troubled dreams, saw a strange figure glide out into the night. Rising quickly, he saw the lamps had been changed about and beside his bed lay the hot scones by which the Assassins were wont to indicate their visits. On a paper pinned to them by a poisoned dagger were written these words:

"By the Majesty of the Kingdom! What you possess will escape you in spite of all, but victory remains to us.

"We acquaint you that *we hold you,* and that we reserve you till your reckoning be paid."

The Sultan's cries brought the guards running, and they were equally bewildered. In spite of all their precautions the Old Man of the Mountains had circumvented them all. He had found access to the pillow of the Sultan and might have worked whatever evil he chose. Only a miracle could explain this performance, and belief in this was strengthened when examination of the chalk and ashes revealed that while there were strange footprints, these all pointed away from the tent. Clearly the fiend was mocking their precautions, for he might just as well have left no prints at all. It all went to show they were helpless against his machinations, and the next morning camp was broken and the army moved out so quickly the mangonels and other heavy equipment were left behind.

"I have seen him," said Saladin, "and that is very different from hearing of him. Go to this man and ask him for a safe conduct, and pray him not to punish me for my past errors."

Be this report true or not, the fact is Saladin came back from his campaign against the Assassins within a month of his penetration into their territory without having achieved his purpose to root them out. In fact, they remained as powerful and as sinister as ever, and continued for many a year to hold the surrounding princes, both Christian and Moslem, in terror of their works. Many a life was still to be taken by them, and their poisoned daggers might still be purchased for political or personal enmities. But Saladin was never molested again. However he had managed it, the fact remains that his enemies could no longer rely upon the aid of the Old Man of the Mountains.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

THE MAN HIMSELF

It was the death of his nephew, Ferrukh Shah, whom he had left in command at Damascus, which first suggested to Saladin the necessity of a return to Syria. Ferrukh Shah seems to have been his favorite nephew, and the one in whom he had the greatest confidence. A talented poet, as well as an able soldier, his loss was keenly felt by his uncle, who gave open expression to his grief. Unlike most oriental potentates, who seemed to fear most of all their own and often got rid of them, so that the history of the East bristles with horrifying tales of deliberate murder of father and son, brothers and nephews, wiping out all possible pretenders to the thrones of the slayers, Saladin cherished the ties of blood. From the very beginning of his career in Egypt he is seen drawing about him all the members of his family, and entrusting to them as much power and authority as they could handle.

When he sent word to Nur ed-din after the death of Shirkuh, requesting that his brothers be sent to aid him, the former refused, and it was only when the Franks began their invasion of Egypt that he reluc-

tantly gave his assent. The reason for his attitude was made clear in his talk with Saladin's eldest brother, Turan Shah.

"If thou art going to look upon thy brother with the eyes of the past," said Nur ed-din, "when he was only Yusuf, who stood and served thee whilst thou didst stay seated, then I advise thee not to go there. Thou wouldst bring disorder into the country and I would be obliged to recall thee and to punish thee, as thou wouldst deserve. But, if thou consentest to see in him only the ruler of Egypt and my lieutenant, and to serve him with the same devotion thou hast shown me, thou canst go to thy brother and help to support him in all his enterprises."

Of course, Turan Shah promised to be a good soldier. Nur ed-din had not yet become jealous of his lieutenant and facilitated the travels of Turan Shah and his company, which included Ayub, the father, and many friends who wished to serve under Saladin, by laying siege to Kerak, and thus preventing interference from that fortress, which commanded the route across the desert.

Turan Shah proved a valuable aid. He led a force into the Yemen and prepared a retreat there for Saladin should Nur ed-din come to Egypt with bellicose intentions. He also pursued the rebellious negroes into their country and stamped out their conspiracy with the adherents of the Caliph. But, of course, he never could quite swallow the fact that he was the eldest brother nor the recollection of the time when he was

able to bully little Yusuf with impunity. The wonder is that Nur ed-din, having shown himself such a good psychologist, should have failed to see he was asking the impossible.

Turan Shah was forever making demands, and Saladin was unable to resist them, even when they plunged him into embarrassment. A particularly flagrant instance was the brother's insistence upon the command of Baalbek. Saladin had granted the governorship to Schems ed-din Mohammed in reward for his help in the securing of Damascus, and the latter did not wish to surrender it. Saladin had to march against his former ally and succeeded in making him come to terms only after he had begun a siege of the city. A compromise was finally arrived at, but the whole proceeding must have been painful to Saladin, whose loyalty to his friends was proverbial.

When Saladin sent Turan Shah into the Yemen he expected him to remain there and carve out another empire, but Turan Shah loved the good things of life too devotedly to be content with a country so sterile, when Syria with its abundance could be had for the asking. When Saladin's messenger arrived with a letter urging him to remain and develop the country, Turan Shah sent for a thousand gold pieces and directed his chamberlain to buy ice with them.

"But, my lord," replied the latter, "this is Yemen. How can ice be found in it?"

"Then buy me a tray of apricots," ordered his chief.

"How, my lord," returned the chamberlain, "can such a thing be found here?"

Turan Shah went on to enumerate all the different kinds of fruits which were procurable in the markets of Damascus, and with each his treasurer was forced to make the same reply. Then said the former to the messenger:

"I should like to know what is to be done with these riches, since they cannot procure me the pleasures of life, nor furnish me with what I desire. Money cannot be eaten."

All of which, of course, was meant to be repeated to the royal brother, so he might realize how impossible it was to keep the eldest born at so unpleasant a job. Although he had held rich and profitable sinecures all along, when Turan Shah died he owed two hundred thousand dinars, which Saladin made good to the creditors out of his own pocket.

Upon el Melek el-Adel, another brother, Saladin showered the greatest favors, and at the height of Saladin's career he was his mainstay, representing him in Egypt for a considerable period. Once, when el-Adel was departing for Egypt after a long sojourn with Saladin, the latter insisted upon accompanying him for a part of his journey. This brother became known to the Franks as Saphadin, and was received into close intimacy by Richard the Lion-Hearted. It was he whom the King of England talked of making his brother-in-law, and he was always selected by Saladin to represent him when Richard wished to discuss

treaties or arrangements between the armies. It was el-Adel's son Richard made a knight with great ceremony as already related.

Saladin's affection for some of his nephews must have been deep rooted. When the news of the death of Taki ed-din, son of his brother Shahanshah, was brought to him, he sent for el-Adel, Beha ed-din and three of the emirs with whom he was most intimate, at the same time directing that all others, including the servants, should retire beyond ear-shot. Upon the arrival of those summoned he produced the letter containing the sad news. Up to this time he had maintained perfect composure, but now he broke into such paroxysms of grief that his company wept also, even before knowing the cause. Not until Beha ed-din reminded him that it was an offense to carry on thus because of an act of God did he cease his lamentations.

Efforts to disturb his faith in his relatives were not wanting. On one occasion, when he was discussing with the Emir Alam ad-din the manner in which he had divided control of the provinces within his family, the emir replied:

"You believe that these bequests will be fulfilled as exactly as the orders which you give on going out to hunt, with the intention of soon returning. Are you not ashamed to see that birds have more foresight than you?"

"How is that?" asked Saladin, laughing at the bluntness of the emir.

"When a bird intends to make a nest for its young,"

returned the latter, "it chooses the top of a tree, so as to preserve them from danger; but you have left the lofty fortresses to your relatives, and placed your children on the ground. Aleppo, the capital of a large state, is in the hands of your brother; Hamat is held by your cousin, Taki ed-din; Hems [Emesa] by the son of Asad ed-din Shirkuh, whilst your son, al-Afdal, is in Egypt with Taki ed-din, who can expel him from that country whenever he pleases. Another of your sons is under the same tent with a brother of yours, who may do with him what he likes."

Did the poison work? Apparently it did. The recorder asserts that Saladin replied:

"You are right, but let what you have said remain a secret." After which he took Aleppo from el-Adel and gave it to his son, ez-Zaher, giving the brother cities outside of Syria, where he would be no menace to the Sultan's children.

But the force of this anecdote is weakened when we read that the emir was angry at el-Adel, who had given to another the promotion he expected, a fact which could not have been unknown to Saladin. The latter was clever enough to pretend to agree when he thought it politic to do so, and his treatment of el-Adel showed no indication of suspicion at any time. In his last will el-Adel was made guardian of his sons.

Although absent from his family for long periods his tenderness towards his children was the cause of comment, and on one occasion his yearning for the youngest, a mere infant in arms, was so strong that

he sent to Egypt for it and kept it by him for a long time, even through his campaigning.

In his last days, when he was enjoying a rest after the most strenuous campaign of his life, he was playing with one of his little sons when two Frankish ambassadors were announced. The sight of these two warriors frightened the child, chiefly because of their smooth-shaven faces, so different from the beards to which it was accustomed, and it burst into tears. Immediately Saladin excused himself, dismissing the ambassadors. Nor did he see them again, being occupied entirely with soothing his frightened son.

Ayub received always the deference and devotion due to the head of the family, and Beha ed-din relates that when he arrived in Egypt Saladin offered to yield up to him his newly acquired power, but Ayub was always the sage. "My dear son," said he, "remember that God would not have chosen thee to occupy this position had He not judged thee capable of filling it. When good fortune is sent us, we must not alter its destination." A fitting response to a fine gesture, and the relations of father and son were not made less intimate and affectionate by this evidence of esteem and understanding on both sides. Ayub was given charge of the treasure of Egypt and held this most important office until his death.

Shirkuh died of over-indulgence in the pleasures of the table, Ayub through a fall from his horse while racing at terrific speed, an amusement he would not abandon in the face of repeated warnings. Saladin, who

had held back from the turmoil of active life almost unconscionably, finally became so immersed in serious purpose that this alone seemed to count in the passing of the days and the years. His love of social life, his devotion to the chase and to the game of polo, in which he excelled, received indulgence only in the enforced leisure between campaigns. From these facts and the illuminating incidents recorded by his biographers, there is evolved an estimate of the man and even of his appearance. Small wonder that they inspired the creative instincts of a master mind.

" His stature was above the middle size. His slender limbs and long spare hands and arms, though well proportioned to his person, and suited to the style of his countenance, did not at first aspect promise the display of vigor and elasticity which the Emir had lately exhibited. But, on looking more closely, his limbs, where exposed to view, seemed divested of all that was fleshy or cumbersome; so that nothing being left but bone, brawn and sinew, it was a frame fitted for exertion and fatigue, far beyond that of a bulky champion. The countenance of the Saracen naturally bore a general national resemblance to the Eastern tribe from whom he descended, and was as unlike as possible to the exaggerated terms in which the minstrels of the day were wont to represent the infidel champions, and the fabulous description which a sister art still presents as the Saracen head upon sign posts. His features were small, well formed and delicate, though deeply em-

browned by the Eastern sun, and terminated by a flowing and curled black beard, which seemed trimmed with peculiar care. The nose was straight and regular, the eyes keen, deep-set, black and glowing, and his teeth equalled in beauty the ivory of his deserts. The person and proportions of the Saracen, in short, might have been compared to his sheeny and crescent-formed saber, with its narrow and light, but bright and keen Damascus blade. The Emir was in the very flower of his age, and might perhaps have been termed eminently beautiful but for the narrowness of his forehead and something of too much thinness and sharpness of feature, or at least what might have seemed such in a European estimate of beauty."

This is the portrait, the only portrait extant of Saladin. But, alas, it is only the figment of a mighty imagination. Very likely it approximated the real man. When Sir Walter Scott transferred the great Sultan to the pages of his romance of the Crusades, the ever charming "Talisman," he derived his vizualization of the mighty antagonist of Richard from a study of all the authorities available at the time, picking up an exact detail here and there, and filling in the vacant places by that sense of divination which is the cherished possession of poets. Certainly he created an outstanding individual who corresponded in general with such intimations and stray details as may be found in the accounts of the contemporaries of the Sultan, and he made Saladin vivid for thousands who could not of themselves create a definite portrait.

THE SULTAN OF EGYPT
(*From an Old French Print*)

One may cavil at some of the details, as for instance that "his nose was straight and regular," for that is not usual of oriental noses. Possibly Scott was influenced by the fact that the Kurds, of whom Saladin was one, were Aryans, and fell into the common error of believing that this meant a racial descent different from that of their Semitic neighbors. Somehow it seems more fitting that the Commander of the Faithful should have had a nose curving like his sword, though not necessarily large or obtrusive.

There is justification, too, for questioning the "black eyes." Beha ed-din tells us that his eyes were soft and gentle and easily moved to tears. Does not that suggest the brown eyes which are common enough among orientals, and which can be stern, yet often suggest a haunting melancholy, rather than the fierce and passionate black?

One certainly gets the impression from all the biographers that he was tall and he could not have been otherwise than spare with most of his life spent in the saddle and an almost ascetic abstemiousness in eating. Dark he undoubtedly was, both by inheritance and from constant exposure to sun and wind. Bearded, of course — remember the incident of the child frightened by the shaven Franks — and most likely the beard was black in his earlier manhood, though at the time Scott chose to present him we know — again from Beha ed-din — that it was grizzling. This fact is brought to us at the time when Jerusalem was threatened by Richard's army and Saladin was on his knees in prayer. "I saw

the tears fall on to his grizzling beard," wrote the chronicler.

But we may be sure the beard was well cared for. The Moslems were ever particular about their bathing and their beards. Much attention was given to the trimming, brushing, combing and perfuming. It was a longer beard than the Frenchman, who is almost the only European who still clings to this facial adornment, wears today. The aristocrat usually wore it descending straight from the cheek bones, and age called for greater length than youth, but in all instances every hair was expected to stand out distinctly, patent evidence of the attention given to it.

His was a commanding figure, we are told, so we can agree with Scott that he stood erect and sinewy, and, being both of good breeding and a well trained soldier, his arms would look long as they hung close to his body, and the hands, alert and accustomed to the agile use of the scimitar, could be nothing but nervous and slender.

A lofty brow surely, and clear and serene in repose, as befitted one who thought much and deeply on the fundamentals of life, who feared not man nor death, and was as gifted in reading the souls of men as he was generous in judging them. "His face expressed kindliness, his modesty was great and his politeness perfect."

With these few details we must rest content. For some inexplicable reason the chroniclers, who went into details enough with persons of lesser importance

and interest, refrained from describing their greatest hero. What the times lacked was a good reporter, one of the kind developed by metropolitan journalism in our own day. Here was one of the outstanding figures of all time, unlike his fellows in many significant personal characteristics, a definite, positive individual, hard as steel where his principles were involved, yet surprisingly responsive to emotional appeal, a Lord Bountiful inspired to perform many gracious and beautiful acts, magnificent in his attitude towards life and contemptuous of its pettiness, yet withal practical in meeting its problems, extraordinarily successful considering his obstacles, but never losing touch with facts or the fleeting character of temporal triumphs, yet the teeming records of his progress missed so many details we fain would know!

Scott speaks of his manners as "grave, graceful and decorous," in which he is abundantly supported by the evidence, but whence did he draw the inference suggested in his assertion that these indicated "the habitual restraint which men and women of warm and choleric temper often set as a guard upon the native impetuosity of disposition"? How does this accord with the known facts?

One evening when he was tired by the strenuous exertions of an unusually harassing day, and was about to retire, an old slave entered his tent bearing a petition which he wished Saladin to sign. "I am tired," said the latter, "let me have it later." Instead of obeying, the mameluke, presuming upon the Sultan's

affection for him, opened the petition and held it up to his eyes so that he could not avoid reading the signatures. Saladin, seeing the name at the head, remarked that its owner was a worthy person and entitled to a favorable hearing. "Then let my master write his approval," persisted the servant. The Sultan remarked that he lacked writing materials. "There they are," returned the slave, pointing to an inkstand near by, but made no effort to fetch it. Saladin turned, saw it and stretching out, contrived to reach it, after which he appended his signature. When the slave had gone, Beha ed-din, who had been an astounded eye witness, alluded to the Sultan's kindliness. "It is not worth speaking of," said Saladin indifferently.

Rarely indeed do the chronicles record the breaking down of his self-control except in grief over the loss of those to whom he was attached, or in sympathy with the unfortunate. Not a single choleric outbreak, not a single venting of temper, though he was often sorely tried. This self-restraint must have been inherent, though it is even more marked in his later years than at the beginning of his career, proof enough that his ever-increasing power did not turn his head.

A marked instance came at the close when the emirs, angered because he had restrained their looting proclivities, did not budge when ordered to charge the enemy. When he made camp that night the emirs feared to face him. His own son, el Melek ez-Zaher, confessed to Beha ed-din that he expected to witness some executions. "I had not the courage to enter his

tent until he called for me," said the Prince. "When I went in, I saw that he had just received a quantity of fruit that had been sent to him from Damascus. 'Send for the emirs,' he said, 'let them come and taste.' These words removed my anxiety, and I went to summon them. They entered trembling, but he received them with smiles and so graciously that they were reassured and set at their ease."

Perhaps most disappointing is the utter lack of food for romance of the heart. Whether it was because the Moslem writers did not wish to detract from the bigness of their hero by bringing forward woman and her entanglements, or for the reason that the love affairs of the East are not regarded from our point of view, there is no reference to sex relations beyond cursory references to his married life. The Christian chroniclers, to whom Saladin was always a fascinating personality, whether to be praised or reviled, delved wide and deep in their search for facts upon which to base a romantic tale. Finding none, they invented quite a few.

Reference has already been made to Eleanor of France. A hundred years after Saladin's time French ladies were being thrilled by the tale as set down in verse by the author of "Recits d'un Menestral de Reims." How they must have glowed with excitement when the Queen, with her two demoiselles carrying coffers stuffed with gold and silver, followed Saladin's messenger through the secret passage from her chamber to the waiting galley on the strand of sleeping Antioch! And the suspense when the fair lady stands

" with one foot on sea and one on shore "! Where were the sympathies of the ladies of France — with the royal husband or the gallant Saracen who had roused the Queen's love by the mere report of his brilliant deeds? There is not much room for doubt. Good Christians though they were, to whom all Moslems must be abhorrent, the cunning author had given the irresistible fillip to his romance, and it is safe to say that many a little foot stamped the floor in protest against its interruption, as many a gurgle of approving laughter greeted Eleanor's reply to the King's demand for an explanation: "God's name! because of your poltroonery. You are not worth a rotten apple. And I have heard such fine things of Saladin!"

There is one tale from Arab sources which the suspicious may think open to different interpretations. It refers to a fascinating singer of Kifa. The facts seem clear enough. Saladin invaded the lands of Kilij Arslan in support of the latter's son-in-law, Nur ad-din, master of the Castle of Kifa, thereby intervening in favor of the singer as against Nur ad-din's wife. Kilij Arslan sent a messenger to Saladin to say: "He has treated my daughter so that it is unavoidable I invade his country and inflict upon him the punishment he deserves." Saladin, usually a firm supporter of the laws and customs of his people, not only disregarded this message but told its bearer sternly he would be in his master's capital within two days and deprive him of all his possessions. Was it merely his good will for his ally that made him thus truculent and impervious

to reason? That is the accepted theory. The next day, to be sure, he was more pliable, but that was because the clever envoy came with an appeal which could not be resisted.

"Do you not think, O Prince," he demanded, "that it is a sin for a man like you, greatest of all Sultans, to have agreed to an armistice with the Franks, the enemies of our faith, to interrupt the Holy War, begun at the wish of Allah, to surrender the government of the land and abandon the advantages of your position, the welfare of your subjects and all Moslems, after having brought the troops of all the provinces, from near and far to the frontier, incurring therefor great expense, and all this only for a prostitute? How can you answer for this to Allah, the kings of Islam and likewise to the people? Far be it from me to flatter you, believe me the facts are so. If you will not interest yourself for the forsaken daughter, then do not intervene for this bad woman."

In the end a compromise was reached. Nur ad-din agreed to give up the temptress within a year and Saladin agreed to stand with Kilij Arslan if he broke his word. At the end of the year she was shipped off to Bagdad and, so far as we know, Saladin concerned himself no more with her. Nor is there any record of his acquaintance with her before he became her champion. A slender thread for surmise, but she evidently was a fascinating Delilah.

Then there was the Princess of Antioch, to whom there is reference later. When Saladin took the town

of Burzuya the Princess was in hiding, but he had search made for her and she was found. How did he know she would be there, and why was she in hiding? Nothing had been mentioned of her prior to this time, but the Arab chronicler wrote:

"She had given the Sultan many a counsel against his enemies, whose secrets she knew well, so that he held her in honor and gave her presents. He made easy her journey, and that of her family, to Antakieh, as he was in duty bound to be grateful to her, and sought to draw from their relations further advantages for the Moslem cause." The lady had a husband, a daughter and a son-in-law. She too drops out of the picture thenceforward.

And with her disappears even the remotest basis for further conjecture. We meet with Saladin the statesman, Saladin the diplomat, Saladin the soldier and Saladin the mighty ruler, but never with Saladin the lover.

CHAPTER TWELVE

A NIGHT WITH THE SULTAN

In the Palace at Damascus Saladin entertained his friends and visitors from far and near in those intervals of repose which his active campaigning permitted. There was polo and the chase and the mental stimulus of chess, and beyond all these were the gatherings for social intercourse.

In his preface to "The Talisman" Scott speaks of Saladin's "sense of his own dignity, which seemed to impose a certain formality of behavior on him who entertained it." Ah, yes, unseemliness in word or manner was not tolerated by the Sultan. "He would talk with none but persons of good conversation," says Beha ed-din, "lest his ears should be offended."

Does this give the impression that an evening with the Sultan was a solemn affair, and that he was a stickler for the niceties of conventional behavior? Many of his contemporaries thought quite the contrary. Indeed, some criticized openly the free and easy goings on in his presence. Not at all, apparently, like the etiquette imposed by earlier Sultans. At Nur ed-din's receptions, for instance, men observed the strictest pro-

priety, each man remaining silent until called upon to speak, and the Sultan always fearful and imposing, maintaining the aloofness of one who would not permit it to be forgotten that he held the fate of all men in the palm of his hand. Conversation, according to Ibn al-Athir, was limited to such subjects as jurisprudence, religion and the histories of the saints. Only those took the floor who knew the Koran by heart, or were well versed in the Traditions — that is, the hafedhs, or holy men. These and the poets and the learned ones who could recite the events of Mohammedan history handed down by oral tradition. Solemn affairs they must have been, with small talk only to be whispered in the corners.

The change to Saladin's freedom shocked those privileged individuals who had held the spot light in the reign of his predecessor, and Abou'l-Kacem ibn Asaker of Damascus was so disgusted with the license permitted by Saladin that he left one of his assemblies in frank disgust, and wrathfully refused his later invitations. When Saladin asked for an explanation the indignant scholar minced no words in making known his feelings.

"Your gatherings disgust me," he said flatly, "to the bottom of my soul. They are like the meetings of the common people, where no one listens and no one responds to those who speak. Formerly, when I took part in the assemblies of Nur ed-din, his views alone inspired us with so much respect that we stood before him as if 'we had the bird perched upon our head,' as

the proverb says. When he spoke we listened in silence, and when he addressed us he received all attention."

Saladin accepted the rebuke of the irate hafedh in all humility, apologized duly, and admonished his friends to be more discreet when the old fellow was around — but not otherwise. Beha ed-din gives us an idea of the Sultan's own conception of a pleasant evening when he says, "He was well acquainted with the pedigrees of the old Arabs, and with the details of their battles; he knew all their adventures and had the pedigrees of their horses at his fingers' ends. He was the master of much strange and curious lore. Thus, in conversation with him people always heard things which they never could have learned from others." Add to this the fact that "he was of a sociable disposition, of a sweet temper and delightful to talk with," and it is not difficult to realize that his affairs were different indeed from those presided over by Nur ed-din.

While Saladin preferred the society of the wise men, the hafedhs and scholars, he appreciated all kinds of talent and apparently, while the great and learned predominated at his evenings, the merely entertaining were welcome also. Sometimes he would himself recite some poem which had appealed to him and the poets were always assured of a warm reception.

Ibn Khallikan, author of a biographical dictionary of eminent Moslems, quotes this as one of the poems the Sultan loved to recite to his company:

"The harbinger of spring let its voice be heard, and the image of my beloved visited me in a dream, taking

every precaution against jealous spies. I had nearly awakened those around me by the joy which that visit gave me, and she, through desire, had nearly torn asunder the veil which concealed her love. I awoke when my hopes had led me to imagine that I would obtain my utmost wish; but then my happiness was changed to sorrow."

A society of men only, of course, the women being confined to their own apartments. Among the constant attendants were Cadi el-Fadil, a learned judge and Secretary of State, when he was not representing the Sultan in Egypt; Imad ed-din, a distinguished scholar, and the Sultan's Secretary of State; el Heccari, the lawyer who had been so useful in Egypt when Saladin first came into power in persuading the jealous emirs, and who took advantage of his intimacy by addressing his master with a bluntness which scandalized the more sedate courtiers. He must have made a picturesque figure with a lawyer's turban surmounting a soldier's uniform. Then there was Osama, the romantic Prince of Sheyzar, whose long life had been one series of startling adventures, a veritable orgy of blood and slaughter and political intrigues. Judging by his autobiography, he must have had many a tale to tell which would make any company stand open-mouthed in wonderment. Finally there were all the distinguished strangers who might be in Damascus at the time, for it was well known that nothing delighted the Sultan more than to do honor to men of parts.

It is easy enough to see that a host who would gather

so many different kinds of men would have no stomach for the formalities which hem in the spirit and check free intercourse. Having surrounded himself with clever and talented men his object was to draw from each what he had to give for the entertainment or instruction of the company, and at the same time create the subtle spirit of fellowship which would inspire the poets and weavers of tales among them to give free rein to their fancy. The more one delves into those nights at Damascus the more one is convinced that they must have been really worth while, gatherings from which the participants went forth stimulated to high purpose and aglow with that warmth of comradery which issues only from the free contact of man with man in the glow of lamp and candle light, when bodies are relaxed and tongues run freely.

It is not difficult to reconstruct such a night from the evidence at hand sufficiently to give some impression of its atmosphere. The Sultan is on the scene early, for he is punctilious in politeness to his guests. He is in simple attire, for it is his habit to wear only garments of wool, cotton or linen, and though there is much mention of his gifts of handsome "robes of honor" to simple holy men, poets and scholars, as well as to princes, ambassadors and warriors of mark, his pleasure evidently was in the giving of these elegant garments and not in the wearing of them.

The guests arrive, are greeted warmly and simply, for Saladin puts aside formal ceremony wherever it can be avoided. Even newcomers are made to feel that

this is a home rather than the audience chamber of a palace, and the man who welcomes them a kindly host rather than a sovereign. A thoughtful and bounteous host, too, for there is no lack at his table nor in attendance upon his guests. Whatever their hearts may desire will be supplied by him who is not only a prince in fact but by nature royal in munificence.

The guests go on from him, still occupied in receiving later arrivals, to gather in groups according to their intimacy and their interest in the topics of discussion started by the different leaders. There are times when the hum of eager conversation fills the room, that uncontrolled outpouring of many vibrant voices which annoyed the excellent Ibn Asaker so greatly, but which is in itself eloquent witness that there is neither stiffness nor timidity among these leaders of the cultural life of the capital of Islam.

The gathering may be likened to one of those small clubs of our own day, made up of men of the polite professions, poets, authors, dramatists, journalists, actors, artists and musicians, men whose vocations in themselves compel mental cultivation, contact with the artistic side of life, travel and experience with the world; where each member is on challenge to be as interesting to his fellows as he can be, and the dullard is speedily elbowed out of the charmed circle. The natural eloquence of the oriental, his gift for picturesque and telling phrase and love of ornate word painting, will give heightened color to tale and verse, and be sure there will be no lack of the subtle wit with which

he savors his recital and brings piquancy to its culmination.

That very day, perchance, there has been a lion hunt, and here is Osama, who modestly professes to know more about lions and their habits than any one of his time and generation, giving a chapter from his rich and varied experience.

"In this very city of Damascus," says he, "there was once a young lion which had been raised from a whelp by a lion tamer. This lion had acquired a habit of attacking horses, and in that way injured the animals of various citizens. Complaint was brought to the Emir Mu'in al-Din — Allah be good to him! — and I happened to be with him at the time. 'This lion,' they told him, 'has caused loss to many persons, and the horses run away when he appears upon the street.' The fact was that he would sit night and day on a bank near the home of the Emir. The latter said: 'Go tell this lion tamer to come to me with his lion.' But to his butler he said: 'Bring from the kitchen one of the rams meant to be slaughtered, and let it loose in the courtyard, so that we can see how the lion will kill it.' The butler brought the ram and at the same moment the lion tamer came with his lion. Hardly had the ram seen the lion than he jumped at him and butted him with his horns. The lion ran, circling the fountain, the ram following and continuously driving him on with repeated butting. We found it difficult to suppress our laughter. Then the Emir — Allah be indulgent to him! — said: 'This lion is a miserable crea-

ture. Take him away, cut his throat and bring me his skin.' So they cut the lion's throat and skinned him. But the ram was given his freedom and was not slaughtered."

In the meantime the company is all assembled and Saladin is free to move about. One can see his tall, commanding figure as he listens courteously to some newcomer famous in Islam, or going from group to group, with a compliment here, an inquiry there, ever gracious and full of kindliness, finally settling down with the company about him as a sudden inspiration seizes one of them to give expression to that which will appeal to all.

Too bad that some inspired painter from Italy or Holland was not present to hand down a picture of the scene. The subject would have fascinated the best of them, even though art had not yet been freed from its subservience to church and religion, and these were infidels. Somehow one feels that inspired brain and fingers would find the opportunity irresistible and rise above the trammels of prejudice. These bearded men, so virile and animated, their colorful costumes, and finally the picturesque setting of an oriental palace — for, even though the Sultan is personally averse to all forms of pretentiousness, this does not preclude beauty in his surroundings, nor is he unmindful of the fact that most of his people demand the glitter of pomp and power in the home of their ruler. It is the very breath of their nostrils, and they will never understand the absence of luxury from the palaces of the great. Be-

sides, this was a palace before Saladin's time, and its sumptuous furnishings, elegant spaciousness and rich decoration are inheritances from former rulers. If there be not the almost magical luxuriousness noted in the abode of the Caliph of Cairo, there are still fine mosaics and magnificent hangings, beautiful rugs, lanterns of chased gold and silver, all manner of oriental furniture of artistic design and cunning workmanship, objets-d'arts innumerable, many of them the spoil of conquest; and, after the manner of the Orient, the air is languorous with exhalations of many perfumes.

Is this a night when music will be part of the entertainment, in honor perhaps of some exceptionally learned stranger among them? Then be sure that when the artist rises to sing or dance, the Sultan will rise also, nor will he resume his seat until the performance is finished.

"His modesty was great and his politeness perfect," says Beha ed-din. That is, a connoisseur of courtesy, the perfect knight once more; and the connoisseur, be it in chivalry, in art or just in the fitness of things, evidences his right to the title by the supreme delicacy of his performance.

Abd el-Latif, a scholar and physician held in high esteem, sums up his impressions of the Sultan thus: "I found in the person of Salah ed-din a great prince, whose appearance inspired at once respect and affection; venerated near and far, approachable, deeply intellectual, gracious and noble in thought."

The familiar picture of the Eastern despot before whom the mightiest cringe, and the raising of whose finger may mean death or a plunge from power to degradation, fades out in this universal testimony to the affability of this mightiest of Sultans and the ease of the humble scholars in his presence.

Beha ed-din gives us a picture of the indifference to power and greatness of some of these, which amounts almost to disrespect, yet is matched by equally astonishing humility on the part of the Sultan. The son of the Lord of Tabriz had renounced his rank to become a Sufi, a devotee to the theory that human life is but a journey, in which the seeker after God is like a traveler, his object the attainment of a perfection which will enable him to lose his identity by absorption into God. He came into the tent of the Cadi unannounced one evening, and said he would like to see the Sultan, of whose acts he professed himself to be an admirer. Beha ed-din arranged an audience with Saladin that same night, during which the visitor recited a tradition of the Prophet, talked of religion and exhorted the Sultan "to practice good works," to all of which the Sultan listened respectfully, in the spirit of a decorous pupil before his master. The next morning the Sufi, having slept in the Cadi's tent, announced his purpose to depart at once. In vain did the Cadi plead with him to show the Sultan the courtesy of paying him a visit of farewell. He who had surrendered voluntarily the inheritance of Tabriz could not be influenced to show respect even to a Sultan. Off he went with scant ceremony, leaving the Cadi

to report the fact to his royal master. For the first and only time, apparently, Saladin was openly vexed with his loyal secretary.

"What," he exclaimed, "am I to receive the visit of a man like that and let him depart with no evidence of my liberality?"

He was so deeply stirred that the Cadi felt he must try to placate him, and despatched forthwith a letter to the Sufi, begging him to return. When he came the Sultan kept him as his guest of honor for several days, and "sent him away laden with gifts — a robe of honor, a suitable riding animal and a great number of garments for distribution among the members of his family, and his disciples and neighbors. He gave him also money for the expenses of his journey."

Of all who were welcomed in his home none brought so much joy to him as this type of holy man, learned and talented expounders of the Koran. There would be no ground for criticizing the behavior of the assemblage when one of these took the floor at the gatherings in the Palace. It would be a mute and almost breathless audience which listened while the hafedh recited freely and with sonorous eloquence, bringing out both the poetry and the significance of the sayings of the Prophet. It might be a recital from the Traditions, in which are incorporated the life and doings of Mahomet. Or it might be an inspired exposition of some of the subtleties of his teachings.

There is singing rhythm in the Koran and the feeling of poetry in it and its corollaries, and the proper

way to recite from them calls for a rhythmic swaying motion of the body which in itself has a decided influence upon the listener, the more so if he be also a devout believer. Little reason to doubt that those who hearken will be moved to ardent sympathy, whether it be a denunciation of the infidel or a call to kindliness and charity.

For Saladin — and probably this was true also of all his guests — there was likewise great intellectual pleasure in these recitals, for these expounders of hidden meanings were adepts in all the subtleties of logic so dear to the oriental mind, and there was feast for the brain as well as the soul in their performance.

Fruitful as well as delightful were these nights at the Palace in Damascus — as they had been previously in the Palace at Cairo. But, alas, they came only rarely once the Sultan had launched the Holy War.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

THE SULTAN'S MANY DUTIES

Like Malek Shah, Saladin found the Sultanship a position of many and exacting duties. But, with the former, the country was united and the problem of first importance was the wise administration of its affairs. Saladin, with a great many indifferent or openly inimical emirs to bring into line, and with the purpose of driving out the Crusaders as his greatest ambition, which called for repeated and sometimes prolonged absences from the seat of government, had an even greater and more complicated problem to solve. Moreover, while he had able aids and counselors, some of whom, like the Sultan's brother, Melek el-Adel, his councillor, el-Fadil, and his Secretary of State, Imad ed-din of Sapahan, could be trusted to administer the government in able manner, yet there was no Nizam ul Mulk, whose genius equalled if it did not exceed that of his illustrious master. By his tact, his diplomacy, his compelling personality and his ability to inspire both confidence and respect in his subjects, Saladin stood alone. Which meant, in effect, that things went best when he was on hand to control them, and that

there was never a time when he could feel entirely safe in delegating his authority.

Most troublesome of all was the unrelenting prodding of his own conscience. Custom and the nature of the oriental mind demanded that he be the father of his people in all things. He must be present in person to judge on final appeal between his subjects; he must personally decide the petition which the humblest among them directed to the All-Highest — indeed, he must receive it with his own hands. For Saladin, these traditions were obligatory, nor could any excuse be advanced which he would accept as saving his time or strength. In the midst of his most arduous campaigns he continued to act the judge for those who wished to come before him. When the fortunes of war wavered, and anxiety preyed like a canker upon his tortured mind, he still insisted upon setting aside time for the receiving of the clamorous who refused to accept the verdicts of lesser authorities.

"A just governor is the shadow of God upon earth," said Abu Bekr. "He who serves God faithfully himself and for others, God will place under the shadow of His throne on that day when no other will remain except that shadow." That pronouncement from the successor to the Prophet was deeply impressed upon Saladin. Every Monday and Thursday he sat in public judgment, surrounded by the leading cadis, jurisconsults and others learned in the law and wise in experience of their fellow men. "Every one who had a grievance," writes his secretary, "was admitted —

great and small, aged women and feeble men. He sat thus, not only when he was in the city, but even when he was traveling, and he always received with his own hand the petitions that were presented to him, and did his utmost to put an end to every form of oppression that was reported. He never sent away those who came to complain of their wrongs or to demand redress. Every day, either during the daytime or in the night, he spent an hour with his secretary, and wrote on each petition, in the terms which God suggested to him, an answer to its prayer. Whenever a petitioner applied to him he would stop to listen, to receive his complaint, and to inquire into the rights of the matter."

No one was too high and mighty to stand upon his defense. When a citizen of Damascus brought charges against Taki ed-din, a favorite nephew of the Sultan, the latter ordered the accused before the public tribunal, where all the world could hear the evidence. Even he, the All-Highest could be sued like the lowliest of his subjects.

One day, when Beha ed-din was sitting as judge in Jerusalem, a citizen of Khelat (Akhlat), a merchant of standing named Omar el-Kelati, appeared with a certified memorandum, and asked that its contents be read.

"Who is your adversary?" asked the Judge.

"My affair is with the Sultan," the complainant replied. "This is the seat of justice and I have heard that here you make no distinction of persons."

Very likely the Cadi had no great desire to have

his master's name put in the list of defendants and, before accepting the complaint, he went very carefully into the evidence. In the end, however, being himself an upright and fearless judge, and convinced that the Sultan would not wish him to show any favoritism, he was compelled to receive the charges and agree to have them tried in open court.

Apparently Omar had a clear case against the Sultan. He had been the owner of a slave to whom he had entrusted large sums of money with which the fellow had fled. Before he could recover him the slave had died and the Sultan had taken possession of this money. He came now asking for redress, and produced documents containing depositions of witnesses supporting his assertions, all executed in legal form. Beha ed-din did the best he could for his master, while still protecting the rights of the plaintiff.

"It is not meet," said he, "to adjudge a claim in the absence of the party sued. I will inform the Sultan and let you know what he says."

Omar agreed that this was only fair, and went off content with the assurance that he would have his day in court, and that same day the Sultan was informed of his contention. The latter expressed amazement and his conviction that the claim against him was absurd, yet he would appear in person and defend himself, conforming to all the regulations prescribed by the law. He directed that an attorney be named to act for him in taking the depositions of witnesses and a day was set for the trial.

One may well believe that this was a *cause célèbre* in its day. The great Sultan himself a defendant in open court, and charged with the very type of oppression which he was constantly condemning in his satraps! We have a fairly good report of the proceedings from the pen of the presiding justice.

The Sultan was among the early arrivals and took a seat on the couch beside the Judge. When the plaintiff appeared Saladin ordered him to draw near and to take a seat in front of the judicial couch, which he then left for a place beside him. The proceedings opened with the recital of the charges by the plaintiff, after which the Sultan took up the defense.

"This Sonkor was a mameluke of mine," he asserted, " and he never ceased to be my property until I gave him his freedom. He is dead, and his heirs have entered upon the inheritance he left."

But Omar was not to be put down by assertions, even though these came from his Sovereign. If the court was indeed free then one man's word was as good as another's.

" I hold in my hand," he declared, " an instrument that will prove the truth of what I state. Please to open it, that its contents may be known."

The document was taken to the Judge, who opened it, read it and confirmed Omar's declaration. On the face of the evidence adduced he was in the right. However, Saladin was not the man to come before his people unprepared.

" What is the date of this paper? " he demanded.

The Judge read it aloud.

"I have witnesses," returned the Sultan, "to prove that at the said date Sonkor was in my possession and at Cairo. The year previous I had bought him with eight others, and he remained in my possession until he received his freedom."

A number of important officials followed each other in the witness stand, all testifying in support of the Sultan's assertions. Evidently, it had been a case of mistaken identity and, while the plaintiff had acted in all sincerity, it had been upon false premises, a fact which he did not hesitate to admit. There was nothing for the Judge to do but dismiss the charges. Thus ended the one and only instance when Saladin was made to appear as a defendant in his own court. But that was not really the end, either, which came after the court proceedings were terminated and after a fashion truly unique to Saladin. Beha ed-din, whether it was that he wished the people to see what manner of man their sovereign really was, or because he thought Saladin did not fully understand the situation, explained to the latter that the complainant had not really meant to assail his equity, but had come into court relying upon him to do justice, if necessary even against himself. He had been confounded by the verdict, naturally, but was he to depart disappointed in his master's mercy?

"Ah!" said the Sultan, "that is quite another matter," then ordered a robe of honor to be given to Omar, and a sum of money ample to cover all his expenses.

" Observe," comments the Cadi, winding up his tale, " his condescension, his submission to the regulations prescribed by law, the putting aside of his pride, and the generosity he displayed at a time when he might justly have inflicted a punishment."

The patriarchal spirit, ever driving him to take on himself the burdens of all who applied to him, induced an enormous correspondence with those who could not come in person but still found means to communicate their troubles by letter. Even with the aid of his devoted secretaries this meant another heavy draught upon his time and energies. Then, with his instinctive love of order in the administration of the affairs of the state, and his determination to maintain conditions upon the high level reached under Malek Shah, there had to be constant communication with his agents over the ever-increasing territories subject to his rule. Often after a hard day in the saddle, or even in actual fighting, the midnight lamp was burning in the tent of the Sultan, while the rest of the camp was in peaceful slumber.

Nor can the mere ceremonial duties be put aside as of little consequence. Be he ever so indifferent to the pomp of power himself, the Sultan cannot deny his people the show they demand. There must be magnificent processions, in which he must be the central figure, " dressed in a plain black tunic with large sleeves, a turban over his steel cap, a hauberk under his tunic, and a long Arab sword at his side." In front the royal saddle-cloth, covered with precious stones and gold

brocade, is displayed by some distinguished officer of the royal household. The royal head is shaded by the state parasol of yellow silk, embroidered in gold and crowned with a gold eagle, borne by a prince of the royal blood, and the royal standard is carried by another of the nobles. Even the royal horse is magnificently decked out in the royal colors.

The reviews of troops must not only be thorough but they must be so staged as to impress the public mind and arouse the public's emotions. The emirs of allied states, jealous of every prerogative, and ambassadors from foreign courts, must be received with fitting ceremony and display. Even the subordinates of the household must be allowed their quota of ostentation, of form and etiquette, of swelling sense of personal importance, if their discipline and interest in their duties is to be kept at high level. Here again is a cutting down of the lessening hours of the day.

And now comes a burden which cannot be put aside, and which Saladin, least of all Sultans would have wished to curtail — the time given to religious duties. These, in fact, came first of all in his judging of the comparative values of human acts. Had he been called upon to make sacrifice of his dearest ambitions, all else would have gone by the board before he would have surrendered his wish to be a devout and orthodox Mohammedan, following closely the obligations of his faith.

To the modern man of affairs, who feels he has done very well by his God in giving the time required in at-

tending church once a week, the sacrifice of personal convenience offered gladly by this Sultan, who was at once administrator of large and unsettled countries, one of the world's great soldiers, judge and patriarchal ruler of diverse peoples, can only appear astounding.

"The usual prayers recited by Saladin," says Major General C. W. Wilson, translator of Beha ed-din, "were the five daily services, and perhaps also the three voluntary services. The service during the night was probably a service of two *rakas* (consisting of the recitation of verses from the Koran, sentences of praise offered to God, and acts of ritual, including the prostrations). Each service consists of a certain number of obligatory and voluntary rak'as."

The appointed hours of prayer are, 1 — from dawn to sunrise; 2 — when the sun has begun to decline; 3 — midway between 2 and 4; 4 — a few minutes after sunset; 5 — when the night has closed in. Beha ed-din declared that Saladin not only recited the usual prayers regularly, but, if he woke during the night, he said a prayer, and, if he did not wake, he would get in a prayer before that fixed for the morning. When he was traveling he would get down from his horse at the appointed time.

Pious though they might be, it is doubtful that any ruler among the Crusaders regulated his personal habits by the teaching of his faith to the same degree as did many of the monarchs of Islam. The Koran was for them what the rabbinical decrees have always been for the orthodox Jew. According to the Prophet, Islam

rests upon five columns — confession of the Unity of God, the regular performance of prayer, payment of the tithe in charity, the fast of a month of Ramadan (the ninth month in the Mohammedan calendar), and pilgrimage to the Holy House of God (Mecca). There could be no evasion of any of these — least of all for Saladin, who practiced all with overflowing measure, though circumstances prevented his making the much desired pilgrimage.

There is an incident in the life of the Caliph Hasan which illustrates how fundamentally the Koran governed the faithful. A slave, guilty of an act punishable by death, throws himself at the feet of his master, with this quotation from the Holy Book:

"Paradise is for those who control their anger."

"I am not angry," says the Caliph.

"And for those who pardon misdeeds," adds the suppliant.

"I pardon yours," says Hasan.

"God loves particularly those who do good to those who have offended them," says the slave, growing bolder.

"Since that is so," says the Caliph, "I give you your liberty and four hundred drachms of silver."

That might well have been Saladin, whose life teems with incidents proclaiming the devotee, for whom the facts of this life have little importance compared with the hereafter. With boundless faith in the efficacy of prayer, and convinced of the intervention of the Deity in the affairs of man, he is seen repeatedly turning to

God for aid in the direst emergencies. When the enemy march to the re-conquest of Jerusalem, and there is every reason to believe they will be successful, he spends the anxious night before their expected arrival in prayer. For reasons he cannot fathom the attack fails to eventuate. What else than the appeal to the Omnipotent could account for this seeming miracle?

Small wonder then that he follows strictly all the ordained observances and counts for little the sacrifice that these entail. Even when his physical condition made fasting dangerous he refused to be dissuaded by his doctor or even the holy men, who pointed out to him that as the wager of the Holy War he would be exempt from duties imposed upon the run of men. Such an incident came in his later days, and his reply to those who pleaded with him to conserve his strength was:

"One never can know what may happen. The safe thing is to put one's affairs in order."

All his energies and all his talents are concentrated into what he conceives to be his summons from his Master, and it is doubtless this conviction that he is the appointed servant of God which gives him in emergencies an almost superhuman power of resistance. Undoubtedly, too, this is the cause of his fanatical hatred of all who fail to co-operate with him. Only this explains the occasional divergence from his normal spirit of indulgence. Convinced that he is entitled to the support of all good Moslems, his wrath rises mightily against all critics of the Jihad, as his orthodoxy

cries out against the backsliders in Islam. He can be forbearing with the infidel enemy, whose punishment he leaves to an outraged God, but woe to those within the fold who prove disloyal or recalcitrant! Thus he does not hesitate to order the execution of Sahraverdi, one of the most learned scholars of his age, for heresy, and his sword is out for those who for personal ambition make common cause with the infidel.

Full as are his days and even his nights with the manifold duties he has taken upon himself, he is never too busy to give time to the scholars and holy men who come from all parts of his kingdom, to encourage, to counsel — and to seek assistance. Again is illustrated that innate wish to be something closer than a ruler to his subjects.

One cannot escape the impression that even the interferences with his scanty time have their compensation in this same desire, and that the days of sitting in judgment, or in listening to petitioners, long though they be, and necessarily often taken up with petty matters and tedious details, bring to him certain joys. All Islam is his family, and none of his children are so remote or so humble that he can be indifferent to them.

One pictures him seated upon his cushions before a throng of suppliants, each striving to get his attention ahead of his fellows. Calm and gracious sits the Sultan, seemingly oblivious of these strivings, accepting the paper nearest to his hand, and giving to it his full attention. But the throng loses all sense of propriety.

It tramples the very cushions beneath him. Beha eddin, as he tells us, is horrified and alarmed at the same time. But the Sultan remains undisturbed.

What time remained for the planning of his campaigns, for the visioning of brilliant battles, for the cunning scheming which overcame jealousies and brought all the turbulent emirs under the one banner of Saladin, chosen servant of the Prophet? The only answer is that for the really busy there is always time to do something more, and that for genius ordinary obstacles to accomplishment do not exist. As for the popular conception of a sultan as a lotus-eater, spending a great part of his time in the perfumed and secluded halls of a gorgeous palace, surrounded by beautiful concubines and lulled into trance-like dreams by continued watching of sensuous dances, that picture fades away in any consideration of the life and performance of Saladin.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

SALADIN THE MUNIFICENT

With all the fearful cruelties developed by the conflicts and rancors of the time there were also outstanding incidents of extraordinary magnanimity — most of them, it must be admitted, on the part of the Moslems. When Baldwin III, King of Jerusalem, died, and the resulting confusion gave Nur ed-din an excellent opportunity to invade Palestine, he replied scornfully to those emirs who advised this course:

"It would be inhuman to profit by the grief of a people which mourns its master, and a blemish on my reputation to attack the unfortunates not in condition to defend themselves."

If the Crusaders ever were inspired to equally generous impulse, history is silent on the subject. Yet it well may have happened, though it surely died at birth, and the explanation is that the influence of the church was always present to check it.

Of all the Moslem rulers Saladin carried this tendency to the extreme. Ignoring, except in rare and extreme instances, the repeated breaches of faith and downright violations of solemn promises, he never departed from his word, and over and over again he is

seen deporting himself towards the enemy with a nobility of spirit which it is difficult to comprehend, under the circumstances.

Was the explanation that he had taken to heart seriously those pledges of chivalry which were part of his initiation into knighthood by Humphrey of Toron, and had made them the basis of all his acts thereafter? Was he determined to be the knight *sans peur et sans reproche* the gallant Humphrey had painted so eloquently on the field outside Alexandria at the opening of his career? That is the only understandable basis for some of the acts, extremely quixotic from every practical point of view, which astounded his contemporaries, as they have the world ever since.

Time and time again the evidence was brought home to him that few of the knights in the ranks of the enemy, even those whose high position in the orders to which they belonged should have made them exemplars of the principles they asserted, lived according to their professions, yet not once were his critics able to point out any definite lapse on his part, while not unfrequently some performance would transcend even the lofty ideals he had sworn to support. Were the evidence from his own people, or even from admirers outside, it would be difficult to credit it. It is, however, chiefly from those who frankly sought for the means to discredit him, from churchmen to whom he could be nothing but a base infidel, an instrument of the Devil and certainly doomed to

torment everlasting; from enemy rulers, striving with might and main to undo him, and only too ready to belittle his virtues and magnify his faults, that posterity owes the recital of those deeds which place him in a class by himself among the rulers of men.

One of his soldiers brings before him a Christian woman who had just come from the camp of the enemy. Weeping, tearing her garments, beating her breasts, she is the picture of distracted grief. Through an interpreter Saladin asks her to state her purpose in coming to him.

"Some Moslem thieves got into my tent last night," she replied, "and carried off my child, a little girl. All night long I have never ceased begging for help, and our princes advised me to appeal to the King of the Moslems. 'He is very merciful,' they said. 'We will allow you to go out to seek him and ask for your daughter.' Therefore they permitted me to pass through the lines, and in you lies my only hope of finding my child."

Saladin was greatly moved and at once ordered that search be made through the camp. Within an hour his messenger returned with the missing one perched upon his shoulder. When the mother saw her she threw herself upon the ground, burying her face in the dust and weeping so violently that the emotional witnesses, including the Sultan, had to join in her tears. By his orders, she and her child were placed upon a horse, and led back to the Christian lines.

An aftermath, which illustrates Saladin's sense of

justice, was the payment of a ransom to the kidnapper. It was a common and accepted occurrence for both sides to send men into the opposing camp to steal whatever they could, and the Arabs were adepts in this. Consequently, it was quite within the right of this man to steal the child which, had there been no interference, he would have sold, to become a slave in some Moslem household. As Sultan, having the first right to all booty, Saladin could have taken the child without recompense, but that would have been foreign to his character.

That the Crusaders were ever ready to take advantage of the Sultan's magnanimity is shown repeatedly. Two Knights Templar, captured at the siege of Safed, cunningly throw themselves upon his mercy. For good and sufficient reason Saladin had a special grievance against this body, whose chief had been most truculent in dealing with Moslem prisoners and a virulent influence in the breaking of truces. Yet, when one of these men said, in apparent sincerity, "I do not see how any harm can come to us now that we have looked upon your kind and sympathetic countenance," Saladin felt constrained to modify the sentence of death, which would have been imposed ordinarily.

Another prisoner, of lesser consequence, whose truthfulness was less open to question, escaped not only death but received his freedom. This man was brought before the Sultan in a state of the wildest excitement, terror showing in every line in his face.

"Why do you tremble so?" asked the interpreter.

But the man had recovered his self-possession even while the question was being put. With his eyes fixed upon the Sultan, he said simply:

"Before I saw his face I was greatly afraid, but now that I am in his presence, and can see him, I am certain that he will do me no harm."

The outstanding instance of magnanimous behavior, however, is recorded in one of the Christian chronicles and applies to the events following Saladin's conquest of Jerusalem. There was plenty of reason for the Sultan to deal harshly with those within its walls. The memory of the wholesale and altogether defenseless massacre of its Moslem inhabitants when the Crusaders had taken possession was still keen. Then Balian of Ibelin, commander of the city, was there in violation of his solemn promise. A fugitive after the battle of Hattin, he had written to the Sultan, begging permission to conduct his wife from Tyre to Jerusalem through the Moslem lines, and promising not to stay more than a single night in that city. The Sultan had complied with all courtesy but, when Balian got there, he allowed himself to be persuaded by the Patriarch Heraclius that it would be a greater sin to leave Jerusalem in its predicament than to break his word to the infidel Sultan.

"It will be great shame to you and to your heirs after you," said the priest, "if you leave the city of Jerusalem in her perilous strait."

It was the same old story. Take advantage of the in-

fidel's faith in the knightly word, but don't regard it too seriously when once out of his clutches. "Then did Balian promise to stay," reports the chronicler, "and all that were in the city did him homage, and took him to lord."

But now the reckoning had to be paid. Jerusalem was taken in spite of the valiant services of her new lord, and the Moslem army was in possession. What happened to Balian? He not only escaped all punishment but the Sultan granted him five hundred of his prisoners to be let go free of ransom. And to the Patriarch, who was making off with the vessels of gold which belonged to the conqueror (as the latter well knew), were given seven hundred more. And to his brother, el-Adel, who was moved by the sight of the hapless Christian population to plead for the chance to save them from the slavery which threatened them, were given a thousand. So twenty-two hundred of the population were freed by the generosity of the conqueror. And then the latter took an innings on his own account.

"My brother has given his alms; the Patriarch and Balian have given theirs. Now I would give mine."

Thereupon criers were sent through the city to announce that all the aged men and women were relieved of paying ransom, and that they might go out through the Gate of St. Lazarus, and the old people went forth under the Sultan's protection, and their going lasted from the rising to the setting sun.

Not all the emirs were sympathetic to these acts of generosity, and some even protested, contrasting his conduct with that of the Crusaders when they had taken the city, but these protests went unheeded. Outside the city, where he could not know what was going on, some of these emirs and their men worked their own will, robbing and maltreating where they dared; but within the city there was little evidence that a population had been delivered to their enemy. From the moment of entry guards had been posted in all the streets to see that no harm came to any one, and that the terms of the capitulation were carried out without disorder or unnecessary hardship.

All that is known of this extraordinary magnanimity is told by Ernoul, the squire of Balian, for Beha ed-din and the other oriental chroniclers passed it over in silence, their joy over the capture of the Holy City crowding out all thought of what had become almost a commonplace in the behavior of their master.

"Such," reports the Squire, "was the charity done by Saladin for poor people without number." But this was not the end. There were in Jerusalem many ladies in distress, wives and widows, sisters and daughters of knights who had fallen in battle or were languishing in Saracen prisons, and these now came in a body to the indulgent conqueror, pleading for his aid.

"When Saladin saw them, he asked who they were and what they wished. And he was told they were the

wives and daughters of cavaliers who had been taken prisoners or killed in battle. Whereupon he demanded to know what they wished. And they replied, for God's sake have mercy on them. That he had put some of their men in prison and some he had killed, and they had lost their lands; and that, for God's sake, he should advise them and give them his aid. When Saladin saw them weep he had great pity for them, and he himself wept in sympathy for them." The upshot was the freeing of all those men whom he held in captivity, and to those who were widows and orphans he granted sums out of his own treasury, to some more and to others less, according to what their estates had been. "And he gave so freely that they praised him before God and told widely of the kindness and the honor which Saladin had done them."

A guard of Moslem soldiers escorted the fugitive Christians to the portals of cities held by their own people, but here their reception was not so kindly. The Count of Tripoli, in particular, shut the gates before the unfortunates, and his soldiers came out and robbed them of the possessions the conqueror had allowed them to carry away.

Endless are the tales of his indulgence to the conquered enemy and finally his generosity is made the weapon to encompass the most telling defeat of his career. Had he not been so liberal in allowing the garrisons of the conquered cities along the seacoast to go off with their arms intact, the siege of Acre would not have been possible. It was the assembling

of fighting men, fully armed at Tyre, which suggested this siege. But of this more in its place.

Naturally, this marked generosity was not reserved for his opponents. In the Moslem world all tongues were loud in praise of the Sultan who was constantly giving with both hands, and who seemed to find his greatest pleasure in enriching others. All the records agree in declaring that never was monarch more munificent in largesse nor more contemptuous of wealth for himself. "It may be," he is quoted as saying, "that there is some one in the world who esteems money of as little value as the dust of the earth." Was there pride and boastfulness in this? Had constant repetition of giving created in him the glow of superiority which makes the world look askance at the professional philanthropist? The testimony of his secretary denies this. Apparently the generous impulse was instinctive and could not be repressed. It became almost a folly and certainly worried greatly the disinterested among his friends and aids. "He gave just as liberally when he was in straits as when he was in the enjoyment of plenty," wrote Beha eddin, and his treasurer had to pretend that his purse was empty, and to hide away sums for emergencies. In the end even that deception did not work.

Undoubtedly this disregard for personal possessions was an asset in winning and holding the support of the emirs, usually greedy for spoils. It had helped a lot in bringing them to his standard at the beginning, when he distributed among them the great wealth he

inherited from his uncle. Of all of this he retained practically nothing for himself. Nor of the almost fabulous riches he obtained with the death of the last of the Egyptian Caliphs.

Here was a vast treasury of gold and jewels and precious objects, the description of which reads like a chapter from The Arabian Nights. Handsful of pearls and emeralds, such as were unknown in the western world — a single emerald "four fingers long," and a ruby of twenty-four hundred carats! Furniture of ebony, sandalwood and ivory, in which were designs outlined in precious stones; great quantities of gold and silver plate, the workmanship of cunning artists and artisans; priceless bronzes, many of them inlaid with gold and silver; curious metal mirrors in gem-studded frames of gold and silver, rock crystals and tapestries and all manner of woven stuffs heavy with embroidery in gold.

Wise beyond his years, perhaps, in his refusal to inhabit that palace of marvels, thereby avoiding the further incitement of envy among the emirs, but there is evidence in all his life thereafter that such luxury was abhorrent to him, and that when he gave up the magnificent apartments to his officers he was not making any personal sacrifice. His simple tastes, unusual among the great of his people, were distinctly an individual trait, not to be traced to any other source. Not visible in his father, nor in that uncle whose death through over-indulgence gave him his great chance, yet born in him and as much a part of

him as the tendency to weep under the stress of sympathetic emotion. Covetousness, he tells an emir, is well enough in merchants but unseemly in kings, a dictum which received scant respect in practice from other monarchs of his time.

Of the seventy thousand dinars collected by one of his generals as a single day's ransoms at Jerusalem only thirty dinars remained on the morrow. Saladin had given all the remainder to poor Moslems. After the victory on the plain of Acre he was the possessor of ten thousand horses. All were given to his officers and men, and a large sum of money went from his private purse to pay the expense of returning the Moslem prisoners freed by that victory to their homes. Never did a poet, a scholar or a hafedh go out of his presence without gifts. He even resented being told he had been taken advantage of. When his secretaries tried to protect him from the importunities of the conscienceless he brushed them aside. "I was often ashamed at the greed shown by those who asked," wrote one of them, but it was useless to tell him he had already given, for he would insist on giving again, "with as much pleasure as though he had not given them anything before," and increasing the amount.

Although it was a common procedure to chastise dishonest servants, Saladin would not permit the infliction of corporal punishment and once, when two purses filled with Egyptian gold pieces were stolen from him, and copper coins substituted, he could be

induced to go no farther than to discharge those under suspicion.

Even when the schemes to take advantage of his weakness were apparent enough he pretended to ignore them and fell in with the designs of the schemers. After the defenders of Aleppo had made their peace with him they sent the young daughter of Nur ed-din to his camp. Saladin showered her with gifts, then asked her if there was anything more he could do for her. Properly coached in advance, she replied that she had a longing for the fortress of Azaz, which he had captured only a short time before. The prompting was plain enough, but Saladin granted her wish without comment.

Some of the tales are fantastic. A rich man reduced to penury, finds in the public baths a new and elegant suit in place of the rags he had doffed upon entering the water. There is nothing to tell the name of the donor, which he learns only upon questioning the attendant. But this is only the beginning, for in the pockets he finds a purse with a thousand dinars. A servant and a fully saddled horse await him at the entrance. Thereafter he receives an ample monthly allowance, and is thus restored to his former affluence.

As forbearing and courteous as he is generous. "One day when I was on duty," wrote Beha ed-din, "the mule I rode started off, terrified at some camels, and he forced me against the Sultan with such violence that I hurt his thigh; but he only smiled — may God be merciful to him! On another occasion —

on a rainy, windy day — I rode into Jerusalem before him on my mule, and it was so muddy that, as she splashed along, the mud was spattered over him, and his clothes were quite spoilt. But he only laughed, and seeing that I wanted to get behind him, he would not suffer me to do so."

Once, after a violent illness, he was taken to a bath. Finding it too hot, he asked for cold water to temper it, but the slave who brought it was awkward and dropped the vessel, some of the water splashing the Sultan's body. In his enfeebled condition the shock was serious. But he said nothing. A second slave, perhaps nervous over the previous accident, repeated the fumbling, and this time the entire contents went over the patient, almost finishing him. The terrified mameluke stuttered an apology. " If thou seekest my death," said Saladin, " at least let me know it." That was all.

At the siege of Tyre the father of Conrad, Marquess of Montferrat, the commander of the city, was brought before the walls and the threat was signalled to the latter that the old man's life depended upon the surrender of the city. This was quite in keeping with the ethics of the times both in Europe and the Orient, but when Conrad replied indifferently that they might go ahead with the killing, that his father had lived long enough and, for his part, he would not give up the smallest stone of Tyre to save him, Saladin could not bring himself to carry out the threat, but returned his prisoner to Damascus.

Ignoring the fact that his cousin, Nasir ed-din, son of Shirkuh, had intrigued to seize Damascus in the event of his death, over his own sons, Saladin gave Emesa to his cousin's heir, a boy of eleven. A year later they came together and Saladin in all kindness asked the child how he was getting on with his studies of the Koran. Whether he had been prompted by enemies of the Sultan, or it was his own inspiration, the youngster replied:

"I have reached the passage where it says, 'They who seize unjustly the goods of orphans achieve only this that they introduce into their entrails the fire of hell, and they will become the prey of its flames.'"

This referred to the seizure of his father's possessions, which Saladin had taken, not for himself, but for the State. The impertinence was passed over without comment.

So it goes on interminably, becoming almost monotonous, this record of kindliness and munificence. In the end generosity had become almost a vice. This conqueror of vast wealth died so poor there was not money enough left to pay for his funeral. He had given away whole provinces, yet, wrote his secretary, "he left neither goods, nor houses nor real estate; neither garden, nor village nor cultivated land nor any species of property." In his treasury there remained only one Tyrian gold piece and forty-seven pieces of silver.

Mahomet said: "When the generous man stumbles God takes him by the hand." Saladin was forever seeking to ingratiate himself with the Lord.

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

PREPARATIONS FOR THE HOLY WAR

From the moment of his arrival at Damascus in response to the invitation of the emirs, Saladin had kept in mind unceasingly two main objectives. He must be accepted as the successor to the leadership held by Nur ed-din, so that there would remain no doubt in Frank or Moslem mind as to his hegemony in Islam; and he must have the active co-operation of all the independent Moslem princes. Nine years elapsed before these objects were accomplished, nine long years filled with hard fighting, weary waits and exasperating breaches of faith; but, though there were times when his patience appeared to have reached the breaking point, his cool judgment and strong will carried him through without departure from the plan he must have laid down at the beginning, and without the slightest sacrifice of dignity.

Less than half of this prolonged time of preparation had passed when he returned to Damascus from Egypt. Conditions were not propitious. Izz ed-din, at Mosul, and his brother, the ambitious Imad ed-din, newly become ruler at Aleppo, though they had not openly broken the treaty made with their predeces-

sors, were plainly not disposed to accept Saladin. In fact, as he well knew, the pot of sedition was on the fire, even though it had not yet begun to boil. Moreover they had seduced some of the lesser princes, and a coalition was not far off, which would include not only the Franks but that arch-fiend, the Old Man of the Mountains.

For the moment Saladin's hands were tied by the treaty of his own devising. The Franks might raid his territories, ravaging and robbing, and that freebooter, Reginald de Chatillon, descend upon peaceful caravans, proceeding past his fortress of Kerak in dependence upon his promise of peace, and yet the Sultan was impotent to do more than protest in words. To be sure, when his own sister was among the pilgrims stopped by the master of Kerak, there was reprisal in the seizure of a ship bearing pilgrims to Jerusalem, but no move was made against the territories of the impudent count. Much might be written down for future accounting, but inaction marked the present.

The truce came to an end at last and in September, 1182 Saladin was on the march. A number of new allies, some of whom were actuated by quarrels of their own with Mosul or Aleppo, joined him on the way and were with him as a string of cities opened their gates and accepted his suzerainty. But the objectives of his campaign were not so easy. Aleppo, Kerak and Mosul, though subjected to severe assaults repeatedly in the course of time, could not be taken.

The first named was secured finally through an arrangement whereby Sinjar, which had been taken by Saladin, was exchanged for the more important city. That, however, came about through the fear of Imad ed-din of the possible results of his unpopularity with the citizens of Aleppo. He was hooted in the streets when the facts became known and a derisive crowd carried a wash tub before him, shouting that he was better equipped to take in washing than to be a governor of a great city. They gave Saladin a warm reception.

Kerak, after repeated sieges, seemed likely to succumb. The town was *en fête* for the wedding of the fourth Humphrey of Toron with the half-sister of the King when Saladin's men forced an entry, and Reginald barely escaped into the fortress; but that held out against all assaults and presently a relieving force was encamped near by. Much as Saladin desired to get his pestiferous enemy it was not worth his while to keep up the siege.

Again must be recorded one of his acts of chivalry. Reginald, whether in boastfulness or to make a show of his own sense of knightly courtesy, sent meat and wine from the wedding feast to Saladin, and the latter gave strict orders that there must be no firing upon the tower in which the bride and bridegroom had their quarters.

Many raids and engagements, some of which were battles of potential consequence, marked the passing time. Then Saladin returned to Damascus, and for a

A SARACEN ARMY ON THE MARCH AGAINST THE FRANKS
(*From an ancient Arabian MS. in the National Library at Paris*)

time there was peace on all sides. The ailing King Baldwin died and there was too much dissension among the contenders for the regency during the minority of the infant Baldwin V to permit the Franks to engage in warfare that could be avoided. A truce for four years was agreed upon between Saladin and Raymond of Tripoli, the regent, against the opposition of the Heads of the Knights Templar and the Hospital and that of Reginald de Chatillon. Later, when these last conspired with the Patriarch Heraclius to make Guy de Lusignan King, after the death of the child Baldwin, it is alleged that Raymond entered into an alliance with the Sultan. Thereby the latter was to aid him to get the throne of Jerusalem, to which Raymond had as good a claim as any. And Raymond is said to have released his Moslem prisoners and sent food to Damascus, then in need of it.

Saladin appears to have kept himself well informed as to politics in the enemy country, and took advantage of every opportunity to keep these agitated. Therefore this compact with Raymond, the ablest of the enemy, who might have made the Sultan's progress much less easy had he obtained the united support of his own. But the rift among the Christians was, if anything, even wider and deeper than that among the Moslems. Raymond was the head of the old settlers, those who had become part of the land, and to whom its customs were agreeable. These wished to live in peace with the Moslems, while their rivals, many of them comparatively newcomers, and moved

more or less by the crusading spirit, were all against any dealings with the infidel. Naturally, Saladin was concerned to thwart them, and his interest in Raymond was strengthened by his personal dislike of the leaders on the opposing side.

There was still another reason for him to support Raymond. Heraclius and the two Grand Masters of the religious orders had been sent to Europe by a council of nobles held at Acre to secure support, and their mission was less likely to be successful if there were no war on at the time and divided council in the Holy Land. In fact, while the mission stirred the nobles of England to take the cross, and was promised support by the French and English kings, no practical aid was forthcoming. In the meantime, Saladin was able to give more attention to mending his own fences, and incidentally to enjoy an unusually prolonged stay at Damascus.

The new Caliph at Bagdad, en-Nasir, more energetic than his predecessor, sought to heal the breach between Izz ed-din and the Sultan, sending the Sheik of Sheiks as head of an embassy to the latter for that purpose. Beha ed-din, then a resident of Mosul, was a member of this mission, and so impressed Saladin that he offered him a high judgeship; but the Cadi, also wise in his generation, saw that it would not do to accept favors and then return home with empty hands to him who had sent him. For the mission failed of its object completely, and there was another siege of Mosul presently, when its atabeg had sought to

chastise some of the subordinate rulers of Mesopotamia for going over to the Sultan.

The atabeg was scared this time and sent his mother and cousin, accompanied by many ladies of high degree, to plead with Saladin to permit the control of Mosul and its dependencies to remain with its present possessors, members of the family of Nur ed-din. Some of the Arab chroniclers are disposed to be critical of the Sultan's reception of these ladies, alleging he would not receive them. The truth appears to be that for once he would not allow himself to be wheedled out of his plans, which were too important to permit sentimental influences to intervene, and, while he was courteous, he was not to be dissuaded from his purpose.

But Mosul could not be taken. Its defenses were too strong and its citizens too good soldiers to be overcome except by prolonged siege, and Saladin never would stick to that if he could avoid it. It was hot and exhausting besides, and he was glad to find an excuse to take his army over to the cooler lands of Armenia, where the alleged tyranny and bad faith of the ruler towards Moslems who had entered his territory upon his invitation, had brought an appeal to the Sultan.

This trouble satisfactorily settled, Saladin returned to the attack upon Mosul. But now the rainy season was on, and he appears to have been susceptible to the illnesses which come from exposure to miasmas. This time it was so serious it was thought

he could not survive. Barely able to keep his saddle he arrived at the castle of Mozaffer ed-din at Harran, where he lingered between life and death for some time, and his own state of mind may be judged from his calling in his officers to swear fidelity to his sons. His brother, el-Melek el-Adel brought physicians from Aleppo, but his recovery was slow.

However, his illness encouraged Izz ed-din to send another mission to sue for peace, and Beha ed-din, who headed it, made the most of the doubtful situation in which the Sultan found himself. He himself wrote that his instructions were " to obtain favorable conditions quickly," and he lost no time in executing his errand. At the end of February, 1186 the terms were agreed upon and Beha ed-din administered the oath to the Sultan and to his brother, the latter being included evidently by the astute Cadi upon the principle that under the circumstances one could not be sure what might happen.

The agreement left the Atabeg in possession of his city and considerable appendages, but he was to acknowledge the Sultan's sovereignty, by having his name mentioned in the public prayers and printing it upon the coinage. It was a fair compromise and it put the rest of the world on notice that the last threatening sore upon the body of Islam had been healed. There might still be bloody feuds between the minor princes, as there was one even then between the Kurds and the Turcomans, which was to last through several years and deluge Upper Mesopotamia, Diarbekr,

Khelat, Syra, Azerbijan and other sections with blood, but these did not affect the leadership of Islam, which was now firmly established in the Sultan, with none to dispute it.

Still convalescing slowly, Saladin moved on to Aleppo, and from there to Damascus, where there were great rejoicings over his recovery, and where he settled down to plan the greater campaign which peace in his own dominions now made possible. His first step was to safeguard his control by placing those of his family who had shown themselves able to hold their own in charge of the more important places. Evidently he foresaw that his next undertaking would require all his own time and energies, and that he must give over to these lieutenants full control over the particular territories entrusted to their care. It was no easy task, all the more so as he must avoid wounding the sensibilities of those about to be shifted. As it was, the nephew, el-Melek el-Mozaffer, who was recalled from Egypt, was so aggrieved he was on the point of going over to the nomad Arabs of Barka, and was only dissuaded by the emphatic warnings of some of the chief officers in Egypt. Saladin could not have been ignorant of this, but he was ever anxious to keep amicable relations with members of his family, and there was no mention of disagreeable facts when the young man returned to Damascus. Indeed, the Sultan went as far as Merj es-Soffer, a distance of thirty-eight miles, to receive him.

El-Melek el-Adel now became governor of Egypt.

That is, the ablest of them was put at the head of the most important of the territories. It was Egypt that would have to be relied upon in the last resort for men and supplies, and el-Adel could be depended upon to assemble whatever was required and to push it along in the shortest possible time.

The son, el-Melek ez-Zaher, went to Aleppo, with the title of Sultan. This was as much a flattery to the Aleppans as it was an honor to ez-Zaher. In fact, Aleppo with its dependencies was of great importance, and Beha ed-din went so far as to say that it was the "foundation and seat" of the Sultan's whole power, and that when he had established his supremacy there he was able to relax his watchfulness over the countries to the eastward — Upper Mesopotamia, Mosul and Khelat — contenting himself with assurances of their loyalty and support.

It was March, 1187 when Saladin, having completed his plans, set out for another attack upon pestiferous Kerak, taking along the troops from Aleppo. At Kuneitera he went into camp to await the arrival of contingents from Syria and Egypt, and sent out detachments to pillage and destroy in the country surrounding the fortress of Reginald de Chatillon. Assured of security against attack from the Franks in the territory of Raymond, through his treaty with that prince, he felt freer than ever before in his campaign against his bitterest enemy.

It was just a year before that Reginald had attacked the caravan of pilgrims, and had added insult

to injury by retorting to the protests of his prisoners against his breach of the treaty, " Let Mahomet come and save them." He had likewise threatened to invade Arabia and tear the bones of the Prophet from his grave. He had, in fact, transported boats in sections to the Gulf of Akaba, whence they were sent to various ports on raiding expeditions, but with the ultimate purpose of entering Arabia by way of el-Haura on the Red Sea, and thence on to Medina. An Egyptian fleet had disposed of this expedition and the daring Count had barely escaped with his life, but the shock he had given the Moslems of the world was not forgotten, least of all by Saladin, and would not be paid for until there was due atonement. For once Saladin made no disguise of his purpose to seek bloody vengeance. No man could insult the Prophet and seek to desecrate his grave and hope to escape the punishment such sacrilege demanded. With his own hands vowed the Sultan would he take the life of this monster.

But the time was not yet ripe. Fate decreed that Saladin was never to take Kerak. That triumph was reserved for another. But his greater purpose, to secure the person of the Lord of Kerak, was soon to be fulfilled.

CHAPTER SIXTEEN

THE BATTLE OF HATTIN

Never before was any triumph of Saladin so complete, or so fruitful of consequences, as that achieved on the field of Hattin, and never was victory more certainly the result of superior planning and generalship. He had prepared long and carefully, had been quick to take advantage of the mistakes of the enemy and had chosen his own time and place to make the fight. Sanguine of victory from the beginning, his judgment was vindicated from start to finish.

Arab and Christian chroniclers are at one in describing the events of the day, but the latter are more explicit in telling what led up to it. Raymond of Tripoli was a pivotal figure, both in his friendly attitude towards the Sultan and in the animosity he had provoked in Gerard de Ridefort, Grand Master of the Templars. It was more to spite Raymond, apparently, than because he admired Guy de Lusignan that Gerard had conspired to make the latter King of Jerusalem. His bitter enmity had not been appeased with this triumph, even though the evil consequences to the Christian cause in alienating so powerful and able a soldier and statesman were apparent enough.

However, a council of the nobles, with the assent of the King, had finally persuaded the haughty Gerard to sink his animosity for the time being, and to join with the Grand Master of the Hospital and Balian of Ibelin in a mission to Raymond, with the object of persuading him to drop his relations with Saladin and come back to his former allegiance.

The three had set out for Tiberias, but Balian, unfortunately for his cause, had stopped on the way while his companions went on to Faba. When he reached the latter stronghold the next day he found its walls deserted, the gates open and only two invalids in the castle, who told him the Grand Masters had left on learning that a body of Saracens had entered the land. Anxiously the Count rode on to get further information, which confirmed all his fears.

The previous day el-Afdal, son of Saladin, had secured from Raymond permission to cross the Jordan for a single day, upon the condition that he would molest neither town nor house and retire with the setting sun. El-Afdal was bent on a foraging expedition, but kept his word and was on the point of withdrawing when the choleric Gerard descended upon him with forty knights and seven hundred soldiers he had secured at Nazareth. It was a quixotic performance, for the Saracens outnumbered them ten to one, and reaped the reward of its folly. The Grand Master of the Hospital was killed and Gerard himself only escaped by good fortune, leaving practically all his followers on the field of battle.

In face of this disaster and the impetus it gave to the Saracen cause, Raymond waived his dislike for King and Templar, and agreed to be reconciled. They came together, King and Count embraced, and it seemed for the moment that Saladin would be confronted for the first time by a united enemy. But it was not in Gerard to be placated, and his enmity for Raymond still outweighed all else.

In July the army of the King, supported by all the forces of the independent rulers of the coast cities, was mustered at the fountain of Sepphoris, between Acre and the Sea of Galilee. Here came tidings from Raymond's wife that Saladin was at the gates of Tiberias, and that she would not be able to resist him unaided. The King summoned his nobles in council and Raymond took the word in response to the King's request that he speak.

"I will give you good counsel," said he, "but I doubt that I will be believed. Let Tiberias go. If they take my wife and my men and my goods, I will recover them when I may. It is better they should be taken than that everything be lost. Between here and Tiberias there is no water except the little fountain of Cresson." What would they do without the wherewithal to water man and beast, while the enemy was well provided? To take that road meant certain destruction.

His speech carried conviction and it was agreed to let the city go and hold the army intact for a more favorable occasion. But the irreconcilable Gerard

could not brook even this small success of his rival. An implacable soul, nourishing bitterness as a serpent does its venom. One can see him going back to his quarters consumed with anger that heed should have been given to his enemy, and when sleep had fallen upon his fellows he went to the tent of the king and demanded audience.

Guy must have been quite as weak and incompetent as his worst critics had declared him, for Gerard seemed to have little difficulty in winning him over. When the nobles rose the next morning they were confronted with orders from the King reversing the decision of the night before. Remonstrance was of no avail. The army was shortly on its ill-fated march. Their only hope was that the Holy Cross, the veritable cross on which Christ had been crucified, which had been brought by the Patriarch from Jerusalem, and which was now carried under special guard, would work the miracle needed to save them.

Saladin was sacking Tiberias, and the wife of Raymond was doing her best to hold out in the fortress, when word came of the approach of the Franks. Leaving a small force to hold back her supporters, he advanced to meet them. Some three miles from the town his army hemmed them in. Caught in the valley below the Horn of Hattin, where not a single spring or stream existed, and the sun poured down unshaded in the hottest season of the year, the King was forced to make camp.

Saladin felt himself particularly fortunate, for this

was a Friday, the day when prayers would be ascending from all the mosques to a Prophet who would be sure to use his influence in behalf of his own. He had a splendid army of twelve thousand picked men and he knew the straits in which the folly of the King had plunged his army. All along the march over the hot, stony, waterless road his light-armed horsemen had been harassing the heavily-burdened enemy.

The situation was ideal from his point of view. On an open field, in usual fighting, the Franks were almost irresistible. There was a solidity about their ranks which made them practically impenetrable. Protected by heavy armor, both horse and man, the knights were invulnerable to spear and arrow. Practically their only danger was when a horse went down and his heavily-weighted rider fell with him. Often a single knight could beat off a dozen of the enemy, and even the common men-at-arms were far superior to the Moslems, man for man. Then there was the almost contemptuous disregard of the impetuous Saracens, the feeling of superiority and disdain for the Asiatic which has ever marked warfare with Europeans. When individuals fell under the shower of arrows, the ranks closed as though nothing had happened, and whatever movement was under way continued unaffected. Especially the horsemen — knights and squires — went their way with seeming indifference to their assailants. Surrounded by their infantry, there to repel the rapid charges of the Moslem cavalry, they held themselves in reserve until

the time when they were called upon to stand like a stone wall, to be overcome, if at all, only by overwhelming numbers; or, at the ripe moment, to ride out from their human screen, an irresistible force, scattering the foe like chaff before a cyclone.

The Saracens, wearing only light armor — or none at all — were far more mobile, and quicker in movement, so that often, taking advantage of favorable situations, they could inflict severe damage, but time and time again Saladin found the enemy as impenetrable as though they had been behind a stone wall. His common soldiers seemed almost weaponless, compared with their opponents, carrying only bows and arrows, clubs furnished with sharp teeth, swords, lances of reed with iron heads and loosely hung knives. Mounted on the swiftest of horses, they fled like the wind when routed, only to stop the moment the pursuit slackened, and turn back when least expected. "Like a pertinacious fly," wrote one chronicler, "which, though you may drive it off, will return directly you cease your efforts; which will keep its distance so long as you make it, but is ever ready to renew the attack, should you cease to be on the alert."

So had it been this whole exhausting day, a swarm of pestiferous flies with the sting of death in their bite, hovering on the skirts of their prey, dashing in at opportune moments to deliver their assault and retreating as rapidly beyond reach of counter attack.

The decision to rest for the night in the valley was fatal, though it may have been forced by the exhausted

condition of the soldiers. There was little choice, to be sure, the way through the hills being firmly held by the Saracens, most of them fresh troops, but it was the last sporting chance. The Squire of Balian laid the decision to Raymond, remarking sadly that the King accepted his bad advice after having refused to heed the good; but other authorities contradicted this and allege that Raymond opposed the stopping, urging that the army press on at all costs, for water must be had if they were not all to perish. He is pictured as riding in from the front where he had been all day, crying in despair:

"Alas! alas, Lord God! The war is over. We are dead men. The Kingdom is undone."

It was an awful night, with an anguished cry for water from all sides and not a drop to be had. The Saracens, knowing well the state in which their opponents found themselves, pressed all around so closely that not a man could escape.

"The Angels of Paradise and Hell waited rejoicing. There was more power in this one night than in a thousand ordinary months, for the Angels and the Spirit had come down to earth to assure us of the victory in the morning. We were like those to whom God has spoken and to whom he has assured not only rewards in this world but also the everlasting joys of Paradise." The ranks of the Moslems contained many who rhapsodized after this fashion.

However much Saladin counted upon Divine assistance, he was not leaving to the Lord what might

be done by man. There must be nothing left to chance, no loop-holes for escape. While the camp was ringing with the exultant cries of his confident soldiers he remained up to supervise the erection of arrow shelters at every point where these would be useful. Four hundred loads of arrows were in reserve, with seventy camels to distribute them quickly as needed. There was only one cause for worry, and this was the possible advance by contingents from the Frankish outposts at Faba and Belvoir through the valley of Jezreel to Beysan, whereby they could have attacked the bridges over the Jordan, thus limiting the Sultan's line of retreat to a single bridge. At least, such has been the suggestion in our own time of the British Lieut.-Colonel C. R. Conder, who made a careful study of the situation, but there is no certainty that Saladin had not provided against such attacks, and the confidence he displayed would argue that he saw no cause for anxiety on this or any other score.

"What we wished," he exclaimed delightedly, "has happened. Now, if we show ourselves courageous, their overthrow will be accomplished and Tiberias and the coast line are lost to them."

The next morning opened like another inferno and the Franks struggled across the baking plain up to the line of the enemy in desperate straits. The knights still had the better chance, for so long as their horses could hold up and were unwounded, the armor covering both shielded them from spear or arrow, but the footmen, maddened with thirst and footsore, and march-

ing under a deadly rain of missiles, were in the grip of terror, and soon lost all discipline. The usual combination of infantry and horsemen, whereby the one supported the other, was soon lost, and it was every man for himself. To add to their torments some Saracens fired the dry grass and flames and smoke rose about them, burning and choking.

Saladin began the day with his usual coolness, riding out between the two armies, attended only by a page, to survey the scene and determine the points of strength and weakness on both sides. Unmindful of the arrows from the enemy sharpshooters, he finished his surveillance before the armies came to grips. The rest of the day he was all over the field, directing, encouraging, restraining as need happened to be.

"The Franks came on," said Beha ed-din, "as though driven to certain death. Before them lay disaster and ruin, and they were convinced that the next day would find them amongst those who visit the tombs. Yet the fight raged obstinately. Every horseman hurled himself against his opponent until victory was secured, and destruction fell upon the infidels."

For the Franks it was the last desperate effort, and it was no cheap victory for the Moslems, after all. Even with the infantry out of the fighting, downed by the combined torture of thirst and heat, the knights held back the enemy for a long time. Raymond, answering to the demand of the King that he, as master of the land, take the lead in defending it, led a desperate charge into the thick of the Saracen's forces,

but the commander in that section cleverly opened his ranks and let the Count through with his men, closing up again when they had passed, and thus dividing the forces of the King. Raymond stopped long enough to see the day was hopelessly lost, then fled on to Tripoli, where he died shortly thereafter, some say of grief and some that he perished under the daggers of the Assassins.

The final stand of the soldiers of the Cross was, as would be expected, around the Holy Cross itself. This had been set upon a little eminence beside the tent of the King, and around both were grouped their last grim defenders. Saladin's son, el-Afdal, tells of standing beside his father while these heroes of the last stand were being rushed by the warriors of the Prophet. The knights had made a gallant charge, driving the Moslems back upon the Sultan.

"I watched him and saw his dismay," said the lad. "He changed color, tugged at his beard and rushed forward shouting, 'Give the devil the lie!' So the Moslems fell upon the enemy, who retreated up the hill. When I saw the Franks fleeing and the Moslems pursuing, I cried in my glee, "We have routed them!" But the Franks charged again and drove our men back once more to where my Father was. Again he urged them forward, and they drove the enemy up the hill. Again I shouted, "We have routed them!" But Father turned to me and said, 'Hold thy peace! We have not beaten them so long as that tent stands there.'" No deceiving the experienced soldier, who

knew only too well the influence of the leader's standard, while it remained untaken. Had he not seen his own forces beaten, only to return to make another fight for his banner and force the foe back? However, the words were hardly spoken before the tent went over, and with it the flag of the King. "Then the Sultan dismounted, and bowed himself to the earth, giving thanks to God, with tears of joy."

Many of the knights were slain, the rest captured. And with their defeat went the loss of the Holy Cross, the saddest infliction of all, and which was to have echoes for many a year throughout the Christian world. "Covered with red gold, and adorned with pearls and precious stones," this sacred wood had been the inspiration of many a desperate charge and the means of changing many a forlorn hope into brilliant victory. But now it was in the hands of the unbelievers and destined to be their mock and sport.

In despair the knights threw themselves upon the ground and made no further defense. Famished of thirst and driven to the last extreme of exhaustion they were driven like sheep to the tent of the conqueror.

Never had there been such a complete disaster. Besides the most valiant champions of the Christian cause, there was the King himself a prisoner. Very few had escaped. Beside Raymond only the Prince of Sidon and Balian among those of the first rank. Gerard, prime cause of the disaster, the new Master of the Hospital, young Humphrey of Toron — he whose

honeymoon in the tower of Kerak had been respected by the Sultan — the son of Count Raymond, the truculent Reginald de Chatillon and the Lord of Jibeil were among the nobles taken captive. Many others had been slain.

"As to the common people, some were killed and others taken captive. Of their whole army none remained alive except the prisoners. More than one of their chief leaders accepted captivity to save his life. A man, whom I believe to be reliable, told me that he saw one soldier in the Hauran leading more than thirty prisoners together tied with a tent cord. He had taken them all himself, so great had been the panic caused by their defeat." Thus Beha ed-din.

The hills and valleys were strewn with corpses and decapitated heads lay about for days like so many melons. So many horses had been taken that the soldiers found it difficult to find a purchaser, and the price of a Christian slave fell to three dinars in Damascus. One soldier sold his prisoner for a pair of shoes and another felt himself fortunate to get eighty dinars for a man, his wife, three boys and two girls.

Reports of the strength of Guy's army vary. Some put it as low as twenty-three thousand. Others as high as sixty-three. Imad ed-din estimated the slain alone at thirty thousand. In any event it appears to have been fully double that of Saladin. It is the only time when the Moslems were the victors against anything like the same odds, and it was due entirely to the Sul-

tan's quick realization of his opportunity and his forcing the issue at the opportune moment.

And now it remained for him to sit in judgment. How would he meet this situation when the flower of Christian chivalry lay in the hollow of his hand? Viewed in the light of his past there must be both mercy and stern justice, and so the event proved.

There were some nasty debts to be paid. That of Reginald de Chatillon, for instance. Likewise that of Gerard de Rideford, and the whole crew of Templars and Hospitallers, who recked nothing of breaking the faith with Moslems who had been indulgent.

Swaying like drunken men, the weary nobles were led up to his tent, and first to appear before him were the King and Reginald. A chair was placed for the King, and, seeing how exhausted he was, the Sultan ordered a bowl of sherbet, made with iced rose water, to be brought to him. The King, having satisfied his thirst, offered the bowl to the Lord of Kerak, but here Saladin intervened. "Tell the King," he said to his interpreter, "it is he and not I who am offering this man to drink." This was to avoid any misinterpretation of his attitude towards Reginald, for he had adopted the Arab custom of sparing the prisoner to whom he had offered hospitality. Then, turning to Reginald, he said:

"How often hast thou sworn and not kept thy oath? Made agreements and not observed them — beside using our confidence only to abuse it?"

His menacing tone and stern eyes may well have

foreboded the fate that was in store for the Count, but nothing happened immediately. Saladin ordered the other tents and standards to be erected, then went off on his horse, presumably to cool off and reflect. When he returned the King and Reginald were again brought to his tent. The King was seated at the entrance, while the Lord of Kerak remained standing. After reminding the latter of the occasion when he had scoffed at the power of the Prophet, Saladin said grimly:

"Behold, I will support Mahomet against thee!"

The reporters do not agree as to what followed. One says the Sultan struck him on the neck and that the servants thereupon dragged him out and despatched him. Another says Saladin drew his sword and struck Reginald a blow on the shoulder, severing his arm, and it was after this he was beheaded by the attendants. Whichever it was, the end was the same; and King Guy, fearing his turn would come next, shrank back in his chair overcome with terror. But Saladin, once more the pink of courtesy, hastened to reassure him. Drawing him within the tent, he said:

"It is not the wont of kings to kill kings, but that man had transgressed all bounds. His evil conduct, the worst of any, his treachery, the like of which thou canst not conceive, and his shamelessness have plunged him into destruction."

Gerard was sent to Damascus in chains, but the other Templars, and all the Hospitallers felt the full measure of the Sultan's wrath, and were all executed.

That night there was no sleep in the Moslem camp. While the weary captives bemoaned their misfortune, the Saracen soldiers, intoxicated with joy, sang deliriously their pæans of victory. "On all sides rose cries of 'Allah Akbar!' and 'La ilaha il' Allah!'" "God is most great!" and "There is no other God but God!"

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

ON TO JERUSALEM

"He to whom the door of success has been opened must take his opportunity and enter in, for he knows not when the door may be shut upon him."

Saladin was not the one to forget these words of the Prophet. A true oriental, and carrying in the very marrow of his bones the significance of Kismet, he had risen to his opportunity at the crisis in Egypt and now, more than twenty years later, he was not less ready to make the most of a favorable turn in events.

The great victory had opened to the Moslem arms the whole of Palestine, and its great cities and strongholds were waiting like ripe fruit for the mighty conqueror to come and pluck. Their rulers were either dead or captive, their usual defenders likewise. At best only a few strong, isolated fortresses could hope to withstand a siege, and there was no heart in the population, a large part of which had never been enamored of its masters, to fight a hopeless war of defense. In the end Tyre, through a strange combination of fortuitous circumstances, was saved to the Franks, to their great advantage later, but one after another the other cities and castles along the coast

surrendered, some without resistance and the others after comparatively slight defense.

Immediately after the battle of Hattin Saladin moved his army over to Tiberias, where the wife of Raymond, cut off from all hope of succor, surrendered the fortress in which she had bravely held out to the last. She and her children were allowed to depart in safety. Two days later he appeared before the important city of Acre. The people came out of the gates and asked to be allowed to surrender and withdraw with their belongings, and Saladin, following his invariable custom when capitulation was offered on such terms, consented. One day was allowed them in which to select from their possessions what they could carry away, and then the army moved in.

Another glorious day for the Moslem warriors, for here was plenty of booty to satisfy the greediest of them. As the soldiers spread out through the city each planted his lance before the house of his choice and proceeded to loot this at his pleasure. All they had to do was to grab what lay before them, for many a rich Frank had to go away impoverished over night. In the magazines and public places, where the plunderers searched as carefully as eagerly, large treasure was unearthed. In the meantime, the Sultan, sitting apart, reserved a portion of the booty, especially that which had belonged to the Templars, for some of his favorites among the poets and scholars. As for himself, his treasurer had plenty to do to find the sums bestowed

A SARACEN FORTRESS BESET BY CRUSADERS *Above*
(*Pictured by a 13th Century artist*)

SALADIN GRANTS AN AUDIENCE TO THE SUPPLIANT QUEEN OF JERUSALEM *Below*
(*From an Old French Print*)

by his master upon the poor Moslems who had been prisoners in the city and who must now be sent back to their homes. The city, with its surrounding villages, he gave to his son, el-Melek el-Afdal.

Toron, a strong fortress, was besieged some two weeks later, and was one of the exceptional places to make a resistance. The mangonels had to be set up and there were repeated assaults before the garrison, "composed of men of tried valor and very zealous for their faith," could be overcome.

In the meantime el-Adel had come on from Egypt with an army to help clean up the country quickly and took Jaffa by assault. Contingents were now sent out in all directions and presently the various forces had taken Beirut, Sidon, Jibeil, Haifa, Caesarea, Nazareth, Seffuriya, Tibnin and many others. "With the capture of Beirut the Franks went away from the district and Islam, which had been a stranger, returned to its fatherland." With the exception of Jerusalem, Ascalon and Tyre, and a few fortresses held by the knights of the Hospital and the Temple, practically the entire Kingdom of Jerusalem was now in the hands of the Sultan. Ascalon was taken by him after a siege on the fifth day of September, and Tyre might have been forced had not a considerable part of his army scattered by this time, "each soldier engaged in pillaging on his own account."

Probably Tyre might have been captured even at that, and indeed terms had been arranged for its surrender, had Saladin chosen to go there earlier. Regi-

nald of Sidon, representing the Prince of Antioch, and the local commanders, offered to surrender the town if Saladin would withdraw his forces. The Sultan, confident of the result, sent two of his banners to be displayed from the heights of the castle. The whole situation changed, however, with the unexpected arrival of Conrad, Marquess of Montferrat.

"The Marquess," wrote Ibn el-Athir, "was one of the most godless of the infidels, a Satan of misfortune, worse than a wolf, meaner than a dog, a seducer the like of which is not to be found," by which the Arab chronicler indicated that he was a very thorn in the flesh for the Moslems, and indeed so he proved, in this instance at least. He had arrived in a ship at Acre some time earlier, supposing it was still in the hands of the Franks, for their defeat had not yet become known at Constantinople when he left that port. Surprised that no welcoming bells had greeted the appearance of his vessel, which was the custom at Acre when a friendly ship arrived, he asked for an explanation. The messenger sent out by el-Afdal appears to have been as deceived in the character of the ship as was the Marquess in his visitor, and innocently went on to relate how the victory of Hattin had resulted in the driving of the Franks from Palestine, so that now only Jerusalem and a few other places were still held by them. Both parties discovered their mistake before the interview was ended and, while the messenger returned to the city to secure ships to seize the Marquess, the latter slipped his anchor and sailed for Tyre,

arriving there the night before the proposed surrender to the Sultan.

Abundantly supplied with arms and food, and aided by a goodly force of veteran soldiers, he was in no mood to carry out the terms arranged by the less valorous Sidon. The banners of the Sultan were thrown into the moat and, while Sidon was running away to Antioch, Conrad was putting the town in shape to resist a siege. Messengers were despatched to surrounding places, encouraging them to hold out, fresh walls were built and the old ones strengthened, the moat deepened and the population inspired to make a new and more vigorous resistance. Saladin, chafing to finish his program, saw he had a clever and resourceful opponent to deal with, and concluded it would not be worth the time and energy involved to stay there. It was then he moved on to Ascalon.

The way was now clear for the final great move of the campaign, the siege of Jerusalem. He had sent on to that city, asking that persons empowered to treat with him for its surrender be sent to him, and when a committee arrived he told them he had the wish to spare them the horrors of a siege. Balian's squire quotes him thus:

"I too believe that Jerusalem is the House of God, and I do not want to besiege the House of God, nor to put it to assault. If I may have it by peace and good will, I will tell you what I will do. I will give you thirty thousand besants and I will give you five leagues around the city to cultivate and to do what you wish,

and I will give you plenty of food until Pentecost. If at that time you can see that you will receive succor, well and good; if, however, you see then that there is no hope of rescue, then you must surrender the city, and I will conduct your people safely to Christian territory, them and their possessions."

It was an extraordinary offer under the circumstances, and it is not possible to believe that any one other than Saladin would have made the like, but the committee refused it. They could not, they said, surrender the city where the Savior had suffered His death, spending his blood for their salvation. When Saladin received their answer, respecting their courage and their devotion, he vowed he would never take the city other than honorably, meaning in open warfare.

The report that Jerusalem was about to be besieged brought many accessions both to Saladin and to the Holy City itself. Throughout Islam the last recalcitrant forgot the cause of his opposition to the leadership of Saladin and sought to join his army, while thousands of Christians came to the city, either to help in its defense or to seek its protection. The city thus became greatly overcrowded, all the houses were filled to overflowing and large numbers had to camp in the streets. At the same time desperate efforts were made to bring in food and supplies, and to put the defenses in condition to withstand assault.

Balian, the new commander, was not over hopeful of withstanding the triumphant Moslem army, and

may well have had some doubts of the personal consequences of his breach of faith to Saladin. However, he made the best of the unfavorable circumstances and was aided to some extent by the Patriarch, who stripped the silver covering from the Holy Sepulcher and had this converted into coin of the realm to pay the soldiers. As there were only two knights left, Balian gave the accolade to forty burghers, hoping that their new distinction would inspire them with added courage and the spirit of self-sacrifice.

It was Sunday, the 20th of September, 1187 that the anxious waiters on the walls saw the Saracen army approaching on the road leading to the David Gate. As far as their worried eyes could see the soldiers of the Prophet filled the dusty roadway, and with them came the tall towers and mangonels which would soon be sending their missiles of destruction upon the doomed city. In the seventy-five days since the battle of Hattin these soldiers had overrun all Palestine, and there was little reason to think they could be stopped now.

At first the Sultan made the mistake of placing his forces before the walls facing the David Gate and stretching from there to the Gate of St. Stephen. Here they were dominated by the Tower of David and that of Tancred, and were subjected to the further disadvantage of having the sun in their eyes. Repeated sallies of the garrison drove back his engineers seeking to place the mangonels in position, while the arrows of the defenders did considerable damage in the ranks.

Only when the sun had sunk were his engineers able to make any progress, and the following day this was undone by renewed forays against their works. After some days of this he decided to change his position, the tents were struck and the army was on the march.

For a brief spell the people of Jerusalem imagined that the Sultan had abandoned the siege and that the city was freed of the Saracen menace. Men and women ran to the churches to give thanks for their deliverance and the city resounded with shouts of joy and triumph. All the more cruel the awakening on the morrow to see the besiegers in full force at the north of the city, where the walls were weakest, their mangonels already in place at one of the angles and mines established under one wall overlooking the Kidron Valley to the east. Now it was the soldiers on the walls who had the sun in their eyes.

Soon a breach in the wall was widening, and the arrows were descending like rain upon the ramparts so that not a single soldier dared show himself there. In two days a hundred feet of the outer wall had been mined and, when this was fired, it fell into the moat. Even the most optimistic now gave up hope, and at a council with Balian and the Patriarch, the former expressed the final decision of a valiant soldier. This was to lead a forlorn hope that night against the besiegers, for he had no fear to die in honorable battle, but he did object to being shamefully killed after the city had been taken. That he would rather die there where Jesus Christ had died for them than to

surrender His city. To this brave speech agreed knight and burgher and sergeant, but here the Patriarch intervened.

It was all very well, said he, for them to make this last stand, but not if thereby they put in danger souls which might be saved; for, though they might conceivably escape, their women and children would be irretrievably lost to Christianity. Even though the Saracen spared their lives he would compel them to embrace his faith, and was not their first duty to save the women and keep the children for Christ?

This argument could not be resisted and, though later there were some who suspected Heraclius of other motives than the one he advanced, especially after it was known he had carried away with him much of the church treasure, it is beyond question that the plan of Balian, though heroic, would have been but a splendid gesture, with tragic consequences. The decision finally was that Balian should seek out the Sultan and learn what terms might be made for the surrender of the city.

There are some differences in the records as to what occurred in the interview between Balian and the Sultan. Imad ed-din would make it appear that the latter was in a stern mood and told the knight he would conquer the city in the same spirit shown by the Crusaders ninety-one years earlier. The men would be killed and the women and children taken into captivity. When Balian insisted on free exit for the population Saladin replied he did not trust him and

would not agree to such conditions. As long as he remained in control he would see to it that nothing good should come to them. Jerusalem would be taken by force and death and imprisonment be meted out to all. He would spill the blood of the men and take the women and children at his own terms.

In view of what actually happened it must be regarded as evident that the clever secretary of the Sultan was either deceived or was misrepresenting his master. Saladin could not have used this language unless it was to throw a scare into his visitor, and it is not often that we find him bluffing. Imad ed-din quotes Balian as replying in these words:

"Sire, we cease to hope for rescue and look neither for peace nor mercy, but for that reason we will defend ourselves to the death and make our blood as dear as may be. No one of us will be wounded before he has wounded ten of you. Our houses will be burned, the towers wrecked. Debris will be all you will have to plunder. The Sahrah we will destroy, and then we will see how you will regret it. Also the tower of the Sahrah will be wrecked and the Sulvan springs stopped up. The five thousand Moslem prisoners, high and low, will be massacred. Gold and valuables will be destroyed, our wives and children killed, and not one stone be left upon another. What advantage will you then draw from the ruins?"

Ibn el-Athir quotes Balian to like effect but in more plausible language. The knight boasts less and there is a sincerer ring of despair in his ultimatum.

"Know, O Sultan, that we soldiers in this city are in the midst of God knows how many people who are slackening the fight in the hope of thy grace, believing that thou wilt grant it to them as thou hast granted it to other cities." Here is the subtle appeal of diplomacy addressed to one who has never been found wanting when the cry of mercy has been raised. It may be relied upon where threats are but empty gestures.

As Balian's squire tells the tale his master went out to Saladin and spoke to him about terms for the surrender of the city but, even while he was speaking, an assault was delivered against the walls and a number of the Saracen banners floated from them in token of their success. And Saladin said scoffingly:

"Why do you ask me to make terms when my banners and my people are already in possession and it is apparent that the city is mine?"

However, at this moment the garrison made a desperate effort and drove out his soldiers, whereupon Saladin agreed to discuss the matter further on the morrow, and Balian returned to Jerusalem to report to the council.

That night the city was prey to many terrors. Some one raised the cry of treason and every man feared his neighbor. A mournful procession of priests, monks and nuns, preceded by the *Corpus Domini* and the Cross, paraded the streets chanting the *Miserere*. The churches were filled with agonized citizens frenziedly scourging themselves and imploring Divine aid.

Mothers cut the tresses of their daughters and plunged them naked into the tubs of cold water, hoping thus to ward off their ravishment. "But the Lord could not hear the prayers and the clamor made in the city, whose wickedness would not permit these to rise to him."

Balian returned to the Sultan the next day and there was a lot of parleying and bargaining, with Balian wisely reverting many times to the repute of the Sultan for magnanimity toward the unfortunate, and finally terms were agreed upon. Inasmuch as Saladin had vowed to take the city by assault, it was essential that the city surrender as though it had been taken, but he agreed in advance to ransom the population upon reasonable terms, the men to pay ten besants, the women five and the children one. As for the poor, he would accept thirty thousand besants for seven thousand of them, and in all cases two women were to count as one man and ten children likewise. All thus ransomed were to be permitted to take with them their arms and their goods. Forty days were allowed for the payments and all who failed to pay within that time were to become the absolute property of the Sultan. How he exercised his power over these unfortunates had already been told.

Again it was a Friday which saw the final act in this triumph of the Moslem arms, and their rejoicing was not lessened by the fact that it was also the anniversary of "the night of the ascension of the Holy Prophet into Heaven." The whole of Islam was ex-

cited when it was announced that the surrender coincided with the date of Mahomet's ride to Jerusalem with the Angel Gabriel. That had been a foreshadowing of this very conquest, according to the learned doctors!

"What a wonderful coincidence!" exclaimed the devout Beha ed-din. "God allowed the Moslems to take the city as a celebration of the anniversary of their Holy Prophet's midnight journey. Truly this is a sign that this deed was pleasing to Almighty God!"

So ran the thought from one end to another of the Moslem lands and every hafedh and scholar who could find any means of transportation was off to participate in the solemn celebration within the city itself. For weeks upon end, while the golden cross was being taken down from the Mosque, and the latter cleansed with rose water and purified of the profanation it had suffered at the hands of the Christians, these learned ones were rubbing elbows in the streets and excitedly discussing what would have to be done to restore the Holy City to its proud place of vantage in the eyes of the Lord.

And while they gave due praise to Saladin, the splendid instrument of the Prophet, there was also not a little criticism in their whisperings. For altogether too much, in the opinion of many of them, was being done to relieve these Christians of the miseries which had been righteously visited upon them. However, these strictures were modified to some extent when the

subject of them started distributing the booty, for not one of the scholars or holy men was forgotten.

One week after the capitulation an immense gathering of Moslems joined with the Sultan in solemn celebration of the victory in the sanctuary of el-Aksa. "Rejoice at good tidings," exhorted the Chief Cadi of Aleppo, in the course of his sermon. "God is well pleased with what ye have done, and this is the summit of man's desire; he hath holpen you to bring back this stray camel from misguided hands and to restore it to the fold of Islam, after the infidels had mishandled it for nearly a hundred years. . . . Had ye not been of God's chosen servants, he had not honored you by this grace. . . . Ye have renewed for Islam the glorious memories of Kadisiya, of the Yarmuk, of Khaibar, and of Khalid, the Sword of God. The Almighty recompense you, and accept the offering of the blood ye have shed in his service, and grant you Paradise, happy for ever. . . . And prolong, O Almighty God, the reign of Thy servant, humbly reverent, for Thy favor thankful, grateful for Thy gifts, Thy sharp sword and shining torch, and the champion of Thy faith and defender of Thy holy land, the firmly resisting, the great, the victorious King, the strengthener of the true religion, the vanquisher of the worshippers of the Cross, the honor of the world and the faith, Sultan of Islam and of the Moslems, purifier of the Holy Temple, Abu el-Muzaffer Yusuf, son of Ayub. . . . And hear his prayer that he prayeth unto Thee: 'O Lord, help me to be thankful for Thy favor

wherewith Thou hast favored me and my fathers, that I may do that which is right and well pleasing unto Thee. And bring me at last of Thy mercy to dwell amongst Thy righteous servants.'"

In the meantime the shuffling procession of the vanquished was passing out of the Gate of David, weeping and lamenting the loss of the city which to them, too, was the most sacred spot on earth.

That Saladin was affected by their misery, even as he had been by the appeal of the afflicted ladies, is made clear by the trouble he put himself to in assuring their safe conduct to their destinations. By his order the refugees were divided into three groups, of which one was placed under the leadership of the Templars, another under that of the Hospitallers and the third was led by Balian and the Patriarch. To each was assigned an ample guard of Moslem horsemen, and Ernoul tells how these protected them and that the women who could not keep the pace were mounted on the horses while the cavalrymen went a-foot, and how the children were carried before and behind the riders.

And so they were brought safely to the gates of Tripoli, to the territory of their own people, and here witness the contrast with the conduct of the Moslems, for the Count of Tripoli closed the gates against the miserable and weary refugees, while Christian soldiers issued from the town and despoiled them of the possessions the conqueror had allowed them to retain.

More fortunate were those who had chosen to seek the protection of Egypt, for the emir in control at

Alexandria appears to have been animated by much the same spirit as was Saladin, and allowed the homeless wanderers to camp outside the walls and furnished them with food and placed soldiers to guard them while arrangements were being made for their transportation to the Italian ports. Moreover, when the masters of the vessels sought to take advantage of them he intervened, for he would not permit that the promise of Saladin to deliver them safely in Christian territory should be broken by these robbers!

"And when the mariners saw they could not do otherwise they said they would carry the poor outcasts," and the emir made them swear they would bring these poor people safely to their destinations, and warned them of the vengeance he would take upon them did they not abide by their oaths.

And now the Sultan was indeed surrounded by the zealous expounders of the Mohammedan laws, each eager to impress upon him his particular views of what should be done to re-dedicate the holy places to Allah and the Prophet in such manner that no vestige would remain of their profanation. The patient monarch is submerged in a turbulent sea of words, and the places of public meeting and the very streets resound with them. It takes quite a little diplomacy to keep the arguments of these zealots from degenerating into hot altercation, for what is more dangerous to peace than differences over religious interpretations at the moment when emotions run high and nerves are tense? The joy of Islam is like quicksilver and could

easily run into dangerous channels. But the commander knows when to indulge and when to restrain, when to draw the reins and when to loosen them, and never lets them go altogether until the ferment subsides and the spirit of peace takes possession even of the devotee. To help toward this went the two hundred and twenty thousand dinars received in ransoms, all spoil for the Sultan, but of which he retained none. Quite a few went to the "jurists, doctors of law and dervishes."

Over the great Mihrab (the niche indicating the direction of holy Mecca, toward which the faithful make their prostrations) in el-Aksa was placed this inscription:

"In the name of Allah the Compassionate, the Merciful! Hath ordered the repair of this holy Mihrab, and the restoration of the Aksa Mosque — which was founded in piety — the servant of Allah, and his regent, Yusuf ibn Ayyub Abu 'l Mudhaffer, the victorious king, Salah ad Dunya wa ad Din, after that Allah had conquered [the City] by his hand during the month of the year 583. And he asketh of Allah to inspire him with thankfulness for this favor, and to make him a partaker of the remission of sins through His mercy and forgiveness."

CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

FORTUNE NO LONGER KINDLY

ACCORDING to an Eastern tale a Mohammedan devotee saw Zenghi in the loveliest part of Paradise and asked him how he came to be so favored, whereupon the Atabeg replied:

"God has pardoned all my sins for the conquest of Edessa."

Yet what was Edessa compared to Jerusalem? What greater glory could come to any man than to have captured this holy city, the appointed rendezvous of the day of Judgment? Was not its conqueror assured of Paradise in the hereafter as he was the theme of every poet in Islam in the present?

Saladin had now rounded out a half century. He was at the height of his career. With very few setbacks, and none of these serious, he had progressed steadily from the day that the Christian knight had enrolled him in the proud order of chivalry. Manifestly he had won favor in the eyes of God and His Prophet, and none could say he had not won this by undeviating devotion of all his talent and energy to the high cause he had vowed to support. The infidel invader was on the run. There appeared to be every reason to believe he would

be driven from the lands of the Moslems in short order. Already Saladin, in accordance with his vows as an unflinching soldier of the Prophet, was considering the possibility of leading his army overseas, penetrating the territories of the enemy and carrying the Jehid to the remotest corners, until there should not remain anywhere under the canopy of bright heaven a single denier of the true faith. Said Beha ed-din:

"With him to wage war in God's name was a veritable passion. It forced him to leave his family, his children, his native land. Leaving all these earthly enjoyments, he contented himself with dwelling beneath the shadow of a tent, shaken to the right and to the left by the breath of every wind."

"Would you like me to tell you something?" he asked his secretary some time later, as they were looking out upon the storm-tossed Mediterranean.

"Very much," replied the latter.

"Well," said the Sultan, "when by God's help not a Frank is left on this coast, I mean to divide my territories, and to charge my successors with my last commands. Then, having taken leave of them, I will sail on this sea to its islands in pursuit of them, until there shall not remain on the face of this earth one unbeliever in God, or I will die in the attempt."

Beha ed-din, who was frankly in the throes of terror at the mere sight of the waves tossed mountain high, and who could not conceive that mortal man would venture upon such a treacherous body, he being in accord with the learned doctors of the law who had

declared "that one cannot accept the evidence of a man who is traveling on the ocean," was struck dumb with admiration of his hero.

"What, I ask you," continued the latter, "is the most glorious of deaths?"

"To die in the way of God," replied the Cadi.

Staring out over the tumultuous sea in solemn ecstasy, Saladin said firmly: "Then I strive for the door of the most glorious of deaths."

But from the day of his issuing from Jerusalem —October 30th— his high ambition was to be thwarted many times. Until now he had been a consistent victor, despite occasional defeats; but, if the Prophet was indeed rejoicing in the deeds of his squire, he was frequently looking the other way and closing his ears to his appeals at critical moments, so that Fortune became a fickle jade from then on.

In our distant view of him his portrait seems to have changed. He is no longer the calm, invincible Sultan, patron of poets and devotees, patriarchal father of high and low, indulgent and munificent prince, engrossed yet patient before his many duties, moving ever serenely but irresistibly toward his splendid goal. His hitherto untroubled brow becomes knit with insoluble perplexities, his magnificent patience is strained to the breaking point, his robust physical resistance is broken by recurring attacks of a virulent character which even his iron will cannot always overcome. There are critical moments when this splendid fighter seems to face overwhelming odds from every

direction and he stands stricken, an object of sympathy, rather than a challenge to admiration and envy.

If the fall of Edessa had caused a sensation in Europe, that of Jerusalem appeared like a cataclysm, and if the former had started a new crusade, certainly the latter could do no less. Religious enthusiast and knightly adventurer were again stirred to the depths. For the one the very kingdom of God had been assailed. The imagination of the other was kindled by the opportunity to wrest again from the infidel the rich prizes he had just regained from earlier soldiers of fortune. At the Papal court Pope Urban III had just died. Indeed, though his death occurred before he could have known of the fall of the Holy City, it was popularly attributed to grief over that calamity, and this belief helped not a little to bring new soldiers to the Cross. So keen the crusading spirit that Cardinals forsook both their politics and their luxuries, vowing they would go to the rescue of the Tomb of Christ though they must beg their way.

At the call of the new Pope, Gregory VIII, many of the leading princes put aside their ambitions and their quarrels and took the Cross. In England Richard, Count of Poitou, was the first. This same Richard, later to be King and famous the world over as the Lion-Hearted, was also to be the thorn in the flesh of the great Moslem chieftain. Two months later the Kings of France and England were made friends through the agency of William, Archbishop of Tyre, the great historian of the Crusades, who had gone post-

haste to England after the fall of Jerusalem to stir up the Christian world. The two Kings received the Cross from his hands, and, with the Count of Flanders, adopted white, red and green as their colors in the Holy Land.

In England a new impost, known as the Saladin tax, called upon every citizen, upon pain of excommunication, to contribute a tithe of his income for the holy war. A similar tax was levied in France, and in both countries the foremost and most eloquent preachers traversed the land inspiring enthusiasm for the proposed expedition.

Again were witnessed the excitements, the alleged miracles, the acts of self-sacrifice and devotion, the scenes of hysteria which had marked the preliminaries to the earlier Crusades. All was in preparation for a move to the Holy Land when a fresh quarrel broke out between France and England, causing repeated postponements. William of Sicily was actually the first European ruler to take action, and it was he who brought aid to Tripoli, Tyre and Antioch and helped to recover Jaffa. Frederick Barbarossa, though now an old man, likewise abandoned his throne to go, though this was much later. The joint expedition of Richard and Philip of France did not start until June, 1190. All these were long after Jerusalem had passed into Moslem hands, but the delay only meant a postponement of the trials which Saladin must meet.

In the meantime he had not been idle. On the first of November he had appeared again before the walls

of Tyre, this time with the determination to bring this last serious menace to his dominion under control. From the point of view of his ambitions it is a pity that he did not remain steadfast in this purpose, and doubtless the failure to do so was the greatest mistake of his career.

The intrepid Marquess of Montferrat had not been idle in the interval. Moats had been deepened and extended, until only the narrowest of land approaches remained for an invader; the walls had been greatly strengthened, the storehouses filled with provisions, arms and men secured in abundance, largely through Saladin's unwise generosity in allowing these to go from the towns and fortresses he had captured. Tirelessly had Conrad labored to bring his defenses into perfect condition, and he was therefore well prepared to make the Sultan's siege a long and costly undertaking.

Nor was the latter's usual good fortune with him this time. Most disastrous was the failure of the fleet he had caused to be sent from Egypt to blockade the harbor to obey his order to maintain strict vigilance. With supplies from the sea cut off by these vessels it would have been only a question of masking the city on the land side, for though the city possessed abundant supplies of food these could not have lasted indefinitely. But the commanding officer of the Moslem fleet was negligent in keeping the night watch, and the ships of the Marquess caught him unawares, capturing five and killing many Moslem sailors. After that the fleet

was useless, and sought a haven at Beirut, but was caught in the flight and practically destroyed.

On land, too, fortune was against the Moslems. At the very moment when they seemed to be making headway, and had taken advantage of the Marquess's absorption in the sea fight to scale the barbican and attempt the mining of the main wall, he suddenly opened the gate and with a surprise attack drove them back, inflicting heavy loss.

The bad weather was approaching, the emirs were becoming restless and the men even more so, and the Sultan had ever disliked long sieges. Whether this would have been so had he been able to rely upon the full co-operation of his army is a moot question, but he was clearly at a disadvantage in long drawn-out operations, calling for stoical endurance and hard labor rather than the swift headlong dashes in the open country in which the Saracen soldier showed his best qualities. Besides, with the approach of winter the ties of home called too loudly to be resisted, the men clamoring to return to their wives, and it had always been the custom to dismiss them at that season, when movement was hampered anyhow, calling them back to the standard on the opening of spring.

So now Saladin called a council of his emirs and, while some argued bravely for a continuance of the siege, pointing out what could not be denied, that the capture of Tyre would cut the Franks off from further reinforcements by sea, whereas their retention of it enabled them to increase their supplies of money, food

and men continuously, the opposition was both more numerous and more determined.

With so many different types of men to consider perhaps Saladin could not have done otherwise than accept the verdict of the majority. As was shown plainly later on, only very few were animated by his pure devotion to the holy war, and personal considerations ruled nearly all. Then there were many jealousies, some of long standing, and as many divergent views as there were different tribes represented.

A curious circumstance, illuminating in its way, postponed the Sultan's putting into effect the decision of the emirs for some time. This was the prominence gained in the defense of the city by a knight, whose remarkable appearance and extraordinary valor piqued Saladin's interest to the point of fascination. The Chevalier Vert, one of those amazing Spaniards who seem to have come into the world just to demonstrate that supermen can and do exist, acted up to all the requirements of a perfect hero of chanson and ballad. He appears to have come in the train of William of Sicily, and from the moment of his arrival he was the star performer at every conflict. Distinguished by a pair of stag's horns rising from his green helmet, and bearing a green shield, he invited the Saracen sharpshooters to do their worst. Leader of every sortie, he laid about with his sword after the reputed manner of Orlando and the Cid, scorning the superior numbers of the foe with magnificent disdain, indifferent alike to bolt and arrow, spear and sword. Well might the

awed Moslems retreat before this irresistible foeman, who must certainly be under the protection of some powerful djinn, else how explain his charmed life, his invulnerability to blow and missile? In spite of the injury suffered through his valiant feats, Saladin could not resist being thrilled by them, for, as Ernoul explains, the Sultan "loved nothing so much as a good knight."

Having dismissed the emirs and their troops, Saladin retired with his own soldiers to Acre, where he spent the winter in strengthening the defenses, evidently foreseeing what threatened when the Franks received their reinforcements. The expedition of William of Tyre in his black-sailed galley and the seething conditions in Europe could not have been unknown to him, and he never had doubted that, whatever his success, there would always be the threat of reprisal from this reservoir of supplies and soldiers for his opponents.

With the opening of spring, when the roads were again passable, Saladin moved against those towns and fortresses which still remained in the possession of the foe, thinking thus to weaken the defense of Tyre. He began with Belvoir, which had been under blockade by a contingent of his troops. These had allowed themselves to be surprised in a night attack, and it was with the hope of making amends that he pushed through snow and ice to this stronghold of the Hospitallers, not far from Tiberias. A number of sharp assaults were made upon its defenses, but it was too

strong to be taken in a short siege, so he went on to Damascus, which he left after a few days to go to Jibeil, which was threatened by the Franks. This relieved, he proceeded to survey the surrounding country and, according to one report — from the enemy side — he laid siege to Tripoli.

This city had however been well reinforced both by William of Sicily and by the Marquess of Montferrat, so that it was impossible to take it. Here the Green Knight turned up again and this time the Sultan was moved to know him better. A messenger was sent into the enemy camp bearing an invitation to an interview, and assuring safe conduct. Evidently the Knight was likewise a person of courteous disposition, for he came forthwith to the tent of the Sultan, where he was received with high honor, Saladin presenting him with fine horses and beautiful jewels as a mark of his admiration, and they conversed freely. Whether Saladin really thought he might convert his visitor, or merely designed his *ballon d' essai* as the instrument of frank interchange of thought, he invited him to remain with him, promising him a large grant of land and a place of distinction and power, but the knight, true to all that could be expected of such a gallant hero, declined both the presents and the invitation, saying frankly he had not come to the Holy Land to become a Moslem, but to fight and confound the Moslems, and that he meant to injure them as much as he could. Despite this belligerent talk it seems that the interview ended pleasantly, and that they parted with mutual

assurances of distinguished consideration one for the other.

At this time, also, Queen Sibyl of Jerusalem sent a message to the Sultan, asking after her husband, who was still a prisoner at Damascus, and pleading that he might be set free. Again Saladin, acting on one of his generous impulses, consented and sent to Damascus to have King Guy brought to him. In addition, he called for the delivery of ten of the most important knights who had been captured at Hattin, and when these arrived he set them all free upon their taking oath they would not take up arms against him again. As usual, no sooner were they released than they were freed of their vows by the clergy, and proceeded at once to make all the trouble they could for their liberator.

The Sultan's next move was against the Fortress of the Kurds, better known as Crac des Chevaliers, which lay on his way to the maritime districts of Upper Syria, and belonged to the Hospitallers. But this almost impregnable fortress was not conquered until much later. Having despatched orders to his sons, el-Melek ez-Zaher and el-Melek el-Mozaffer to join in protection of the districts around Antioch, he remained inactive for some time while reconnoitering the country, then proceeded on a campaign against the neighboring towns. One after another opened its gates or was taken by assault — Tortosa, Jebela, Laodicea, a rich and beautiful city, and a host of others. He was proposing to march against Antioch when a

proposal for a truce came from Prince Bohemond and peace was made to cover that city only for a period of eight months.

Once more the Sultan was influenced by the desire of the emirs, especially Imad ed-din, Lord of Sinjar, to return to their wives. Being weary of fighting, even though continuously successful, and laden with booty, they wanted a chance to rest and enjoy themselves. Besides, the month of Ramadan, the month of fasting, was at hand. Off they marched, with their contingents, and Saladin went with his own to Damascus, hoping for a little rest, also. However, circumstances forced him to take the field again after only a few days of repose.

This time he moved against Safed, an inaccessible fortress surrounded by deep ravines, and it was more than a month before this capitulated. It was now December and the unceasing rains had converted the roads and fields into muddy swamps, but Saladin, smarting under the repulse at Tyre and other recent interferences with his purposes, was unaffected by the unfriendliness of Nature. Personally he supervised the setting up of the mangonels and his secretary records his refusal to go to sleep one stormy night until he had seen these placed where he wished them.

From Safed he passed over the mountain plateau to Belvoir for the second time, surrounding the fortress with light armed troops and pressing so closely that the bolts and arrows of the defenders were flying about him. The camp was in an exposed position,

where the high winds had full play and the tents swayed over a sea of mud, while the sharpshooters in the castle could pick off their enemy wherever they showed themselves. Nevertheless the siege was pressed so strenuously that the garrison capitulated under terms, rather than take the chance of a worse fate.

During this time also the Sultan had the satisfaction of receiving the surrender of that pestiferous annoyance of many years, the fortress of Kerak, which capitulated in order to obtain the freedom of its new lord, Humphrey IV of Toron. Here again he took the opportunity offered him to show he was living up to the vows made to that same Humphrey's ancestor in one of the most gracious acts of his career. The garrison at Kerak had held out valiantly against the blockading troops under el-Adel until starvation had to be met. Even then there had been an effort to lessen its threat by getting rid of the women and children. Possibly they entertained some hope of aid from without, or counted upon the Moslem dislike of long sieges. At all events, the unfortunate dependents were driven out to rid the fighters of so many superfluous hungry mouths, with the indifference common to the times, when fighting was the first and only absolutely essential industry. Prisoners of the Moslems, they were destined for the harems and slave markets, but Saladin bought them from their captors and set them free.

The next four months were given over to a general survey of the more important conquests, and to brief periods of rest. The feeling that trouble was brewing

for him overseas, and that he must prepare to face it was never absent. It sent him to Ascalon and to Acre, and in both places he made careful inspection of the defenses and impressed upon his lieutenants the importance of sticking closely to their task of making these as perfect as possible. A short time in Jerusalem, and shorter still in Damascus, and in the spring of 1189 he was again in the field.

Among the objectives this time was Belfort, a strong fortress near Banias, which was ruled by Reginald of Sidon. Among all his opponents this one was, next to that other Reginald whose head he had taken as the price of his perfidy, the most annoying. It could not be otherwise. As the Sultan was supervising the arrangements in his camp outside Reginald's stronghold, the latter came unannounced to inform him that all his trouble was unnecessary. It was his intention to surrender the castle, anyhow, so why summon all this huge force of men, this mass of military supplies, this vast array of destructive engines of war?

A more courteous, elegant, plausible cavalier had never been seen. Modest, frank and more open to reason than any of the many knights with whom circumstance had made Saladin acquainted. His many engaging qualities attracted the Sultan at once and led him to listen appreciatively to his proposals. Let the Sultan take up more important matters, said the knight ingratiatingly. In the meantime he would have found a safe asylum for his wife and family who were then in Tyre. Probably it would take three months to

arrange everything satisfactorily and see them installed, but at the end of that time Belfort would surely be surrendered.

The man must have been extraordinarily clever both in his inventions and in acting his part, for Saladin was no novice either in psychology or diplomacy and there must have been some initial suspicion of the enemy so eager to be friendly. At all events, he seemed to have no difficulty in making himself believed. When he said he would expect asylum at Damascus and a sufficient provision for the support of his family, the Sultan already saw him an ally and on the way to becoming a true Moslem. Those in the Sultan's suite were evidently equally convinced, for Beha ed-din wrote that Reginald "argued with us on the subject of our religion, and we reasoned with him in order to show him the vanity of his beliefs. He talked very well and expressed himself with great moderation and courtesy."

It looked like a great triumph, this prospective conversion of so fine an intellect and so choice a knight. Reginald was of high reputation throughout the Holy Land, both among his own and the Moslems. Unlike most fighting men, he had a cultivated talent, understood and spoke Arabic, and had an Arab in his train who read to him from the choicest Arabian literature, and expounded the hidden significance of its subtler compositions.

In full confidence the Sultan turned his attention to other matters. News that King Guy had already

forgotten his pledge to abstain from warring on the Moslems, and was marching to Tyre with a considerable army, called for some attention. It was learned that Conrad had closed the gates in the King's face, denying him entry, but there were no hostilities and the King's army had been permitted to camp outside the walls.

After a short delay, Guy's army, reinforced by some contingents from Tyre, was on the march, and the Sultan foresaw that the objective would be Acre. It turned out that this move was still being delayed, but there could be no doubt that it would eventuate sooner or later and, after some minor skirmishes, Saladin went to Acre once more, still possessed by the foreboding that the brunt of the next major movement on the part of the Franks would be against that city. More strengthening of walls was ordered and again a solemn warning of vigilance delivered to those in charge.

In the meantime there had been whisperings that the Lord of Sidon had been cajoling the Sultan, and had used his period of grace to strengthen his defenses and improve his supplies. These doubts reached the royal ears and stirred their owner to sudden action. A few days before the date of the promised surrender of Belfort the Sultan's army was again encamped upon the adjacent heights.

If the wily deceiver was affected by this menace he gave no indication of it, but made his appearance at the Sultan's tent early and in the same spirit of apparent loyalty as before. Giving the Sultan no time to ex-

press his altered judgment, he said he had come to say there was really no reason to delay taking possession of the city, and that it made no difference to him whether the actual transfer occurred that day or on the morrow. The only possible reason for delay was the fact that some members of his family had not yet been able to leave Tyre, but would surely do so in a few days.

Whether Saladin was again placed in doubt by his apparent readiness to carry out the terms of their bargain, or whether he did not wish to arouse suspicion of his change of heart before the time limit had expired, he acted as though still convinced of his good faith.

A few days later, when the last hours of respite were reached, Reginald appeared again and asked for a further indulgence, this time for nine months, or to round out a full year! His perfect coolness is evidence of strong nerves and a valiant heart. Even though the Sultan of all the Moslems was named Saladin and had a reputation unsurpassed for mercifulness, no ordinary man would want to strain that too far. One can almost hear the swish of that awful scimitar in answer to Reginald's presumption. One reads from his confidants that the Sultan now knew he had been trifled with and that the Lord of Sidon had been playing a game from the start. But he restrained his angry impulses, replying solemnly:

"We will reflect on the matter. We will take the advice of our council and let you know our decision."

But Reginald did not go back to his own bed that night. Treated always with the same consideration, it was impressed upon him that the Sultan could not allow him to leave, and had ordered a tent of honor to be erected adjoining his own, as there would be need of further discussions. In fact, there were quite a few interviews, enough to take up all the waning time to the exact moment when the surrender of the city was due, for Saladin was always meticulous about keeping his word to the letter, and then a final talk, when he threw off all further pretense and demanded immediate fulfillment of Reginald's promise. When the latter sought to evade again, Saladin interrupted sharply:

"You always meant to deceive us. You have repaired your fortress and introduced fresh supplies."

If Reginald was stumped he did not show it. On the contrary. Challenging the correctness of the Sultan's accusation, he asked that two trustworthy men be sent to inspect the walls, each of them to appoint one, and report upon their present condition. At the same time they would receive the surrender of the fortress.

One cannot but marvel at the cool impudence of the proposal, for, of course, both men came back with the report that repairs had been made and their demand for surrender refused.

Was Reginald finally confounded and made to confess his duplicity? Not at all. He simply kept on playing the game with the same appearance of sincerity. Denied the usual entree to the Sultan, he made a great

to-do about sending his confidential servant with a message charging the commander of the castle to surrender. To which the commander replied that he was in the habit of taking his orders from his master and not from his master's servant. Then Reginald said he would see to it himself and, accompanied by some officers, he rode up to the castle gates on a mule, and called upon those within to open them to the officers of the Sultan. A priest came out presently and had a private talk with Reginald in their own tongue, which the Moslem officers did not understand. The only result after the priest returned was a more determined resistance than ever.

Still Reginald insisted upon remaining and sending messages calling for the opening of the gates. Never was master more humiliated by defiance from his servants. In the face of the Moslem officers they ignored all his orders and appeals, so that at nightfall, when the little party wended its way back to the Moslem camp, the gates remained as tightly shut and the walls as strongly guarded as ever.

"The Sultan was very wroth with this man, who had caused him and his whole army to waste three months, during which time they had done nothing at all," wrote Beha ed-din, and the only wonder is that Saladin did not forget himself and subject his deceiver to some of those oriental tortures which had been effective when exercised by other Sultans.

His friend and admirer, the poet Osama, had doubtless told in detail of how the wives of a certain Caliph

of Egypt had avenged his death on the body of the murderer, who was nailed alive against the walls of the palace. In his early days in Cairo Saladin must have viewed, if for curiosity only, the subterranean depths to which the Caliph's enemies had been consigned, both dead and alive. The ingenious minds of both past and present had contrived many ways of handling a case like this, and some of these were outlined to the Lord of Sidon by his escort, who charged him flatly with having used them to convey messages through his priest which only heartened the garrison to further resistance. But these threats had no effect upon Reginald. Probably they would have been viewed less calmly had they come directly from Saladin.

Beha ed-din reports that " on the night of his return terrible threats were used to make him yield," but does not state who made them. Anyhow, they had no effect. Saladin upbraided Reginald " bitterly for his perfidy " later on, but the Sultan's sword remained in its scabbard and, though the knight was taken to the prison at the Castle of Banias, there was no torture.

There were more important matters to hold the Sultan's attention. The precious time lost could not be regained by punishing the Lord of Sidon, but it was of the greatest importance that no more be wasted. The army of King Guy was waxing stronger through accessions from England and France and there could no longer be any doubt of the menace against Acre.

Still Saladin hesitated. Guy's army was moving, and in the anticipated direction, and a contingent of

the Sicilian troops of King William was also starting from Scandalion, apparently to join with the former, and yet all this might be only a feint to draw the Moslems from their siege of Belfort. However, on August 26th all doubts were removed. A courier came in that night with tidings that the advance guard of the Franks was already within ten miles of Acre.

Despatches were sent at once to all the governors, directing them to send troops and supplies immediately, and these were followed by peremptory orders to start the baggage that very night. The next morning the Sultan was off himself through the valley of the Jordan, while a detachment for purposes of surveillance was sent along the Tibnin road, with instructions to advise him at regular intervals of the movements of the enemy.

The Sultan was now thoroughly alarmed and concerned entirely with getting reinforcements into the city before the Franks could establish an effective blockade. He succeeded in doing this, sending in detachments in rapid succession until the city was well equipped with men and supplies, and followed this up by going there himself to make the final dispositions.

His plans were now well developed. The city was in as perfect a state of defense as it could well be and could be relied upon to beat off any surprise attacks. The Franks, although they were receiving accessions constantly, were not yet in overwhelming numbers. In fact, although the figures of each side contradict those of the other, it is probable that the Sultan's

army, with the additions sent in by the governors, outnumbered that of King Guy. So, while the latter was blockading the city, Saladin was gradually blockading the camp of the Franks. With the latter between the garrison in the city and the army on the surrounding hills, it looked as though when conditions were ripe the two Saracen forces might squeeze their foe between them. To be sure, the camp of the Franks was close to the sea, the control of which varied from time to time, and here was a way of escape in emergency, but at least the menace to the city was for the moment definitely less than it had been at first.

There was, however, one serious difficulty which interfered with the Moslem prosecution of the conflict and would continue to be an obstacle throughout the long and trying campaign which was now under way. The Sultan was ill and had been so for some time. On the way to Acre, when the Franks thought they saw an opportunity for successful attack, he was so overcome he could only keep his seat in the saddle by sheer force of will. At that he had to dismount repeatedly and rest under the shadow of a piece of cloth, which was held over his head. He should have given himself over to the care of a physician, but his one fear was that information of his illness might reach the enemy, so he would not permit his tent to be set up until camp was made.

Just what ailed him has never been made perfectly clear, though it is certain the miasmas rising from the low lying districts at this hot period had an evil effect

upon him. Some medical authorities who have studied the symptoms described by the Arab chroniclers have concluded that he was suffering from malarial fever. Others have seen indications of typhoid. But there can be no doubt his strength was being sapped and his efficiency sorely interfered with. At times the position of the army had to be determined not by military tactics but by the health of its commander. He gave in to this only when its condition became so desperate that any other course would have meant death, but give in he had to repeatedly. With the contest becoming ever more serious, the inability of Saladin to count upon his former physical resistance became a tremendous handicap.

CHAPTER NINETEEN

FIGHTING AT ACRE

SITUATED on a bay of the same name, Acre had been a town of importance, particularly from the military point of view, for more than two thousand years, and had therefore been the object of attack by conquering monarchs from the days of the Pharaohs! Egyptians, Babylonians, Persians, Jews and Romans had fought for it. Here Cleopatra had entered in triumph and here Herod had entertained Caesar. But never before had it been subjected to so long or so bloody a siege as was now about to begin.

A double rampart of walls, strengthened by many towers, guarded the land side, while a tongue of land, on the extremity of which rose the famous Tower of Flies, so called from an ancient legend that these pests had been drawn there by the human sacrifices of the cannibal aborigines, afforded partial protection to the harbor. This was further defended by a great chain and another wall. In times of peace this harbor was the best in Palestine and served as a port for Galilee and also Damascus. The city had become the landing place for pilgrims from Europe and was supplanting Jerusalem as the royal residence before the conquests

of Saladin. An Arab writer called it "the column on which the Frankish towns in Syria rest. Thither put in the tall ships which float like mountains over the sea. It is the meeting place of crafts and caravans, the place where Mussulman and Christian merchants muster from all sides."

But arts and crafts and all the gentler pursuits were out of the picture now. On the small hill rising out of the malarial plain the tent of King Guy formed the center of the Christian camp. The arrivals from abroad had brought to his aid many famous knights — James of Avesnes, who soon became an outstanding leader; Robert of Dreux, grandson of Louis VI; Philip of Beauvais, brother of the former, and a priest as well as warrior; the Counts of Brienne and Bar, the Landgrave, Louis of Thuringia. The latter had influenced the Marquess of Montferrat to join and there was also the grim Gerard de Rideford, another of the knights recently released from the prison at Damascus upon taking the vow not to bear arms against the Sultan.

There was almost constant fighting. After a time Guy's troops succeeded in blockading the city, but the line down by the sea was made up of light-armed troops, and the Sultan's forces broke through these and opened a way to the gate so that there was no longer any interruption to free ingress. But small parties were at grips between the camps as before. Rapid moving Arabs cut off foraging parties of the Franks and brought their heads to the Sultan. Women in

ACRE SURRENDERS TO RICHARD COEUR-DE-LION

armor, so that they could be told from men only by the ornaments on their ankles, fought savagely and tortured the Moslem prisoners.

In all these contests the Sultan was in the forefront, even though he was still suffering, and the weight of his armor must have been galling. His "eagerness and anxiety throughout was like that of a mother robbed of her infant." In one battle, lasting two days, he was so engrossed mentally his physician could not get him to eat more than a mouthful.

But, while he was struggling between illness and anxiety, the common soldiers were beginning to find the constant battling monotonous. This was true of the enemy also, so it happened frequently when Moslem and Frank had fought each other to a standstill they would stop suddenly and fall into friendly conversation. It even happened that sounds of revelry rising from the plain to startle the city and the two camps would be explained by the mingling of bands of opponents in song and dance. The feeling of boredom went so far that set programs were arranged. Boys from the city and boys from the camp of the Franks were pitted against each other, with their elders egging them on, applauding their valor and laying odds on the results. Of course, this did not interfere at all with the fighting of the quondam friends later on, and presently there was a sanguinary conflict which cut off all further thought of friendly amusement for a long time.

The Battle of Acre could easily have brought about

the end of the war and rendered abortive all further efforts of the Crusaders. That it was not definitive was not due to Saladin, whose enterprise rose to the occasion despite his infirmities.

On the morning of October 4th the Moslem outposts reported that the army of the Franks was moving in battle array. It was formed after its usual custom, the knights in the center, the infantry and bowmen in advance. From the Moslem camp they could be seen advancing, King Guy in the middle, preceded by men carrying the Gospels under a canopy of satin. They occupied the ridge of hills, their right approaching the River Belus, the left extending almost to the sea. Saladin brought his men up to face the enemy, he holding the center, with his two sons, el-Afdal and ez-Zaher, at his right. The troops from Mosul and Diarbekr held the right of the center and the extreme right end, near the sea, was taken by the personal troops of Taki ed-din, the Sultan's nephew and most successful general. Left of the center were Kurds, men from Sinjar and the followers of Mozaffer ed-din. On the extreme left were the veterans who had taken Egypt under Shirkuh.

The two armies kept drawing closer until the fourth hour after sunrise, when the Franks delivered an attack upon Taki ed-din. The latter, hoping to draw his assailants away from their supporting troops, pretended to give way, meaning to strike into their flank when the time was ripe. Saladin mistook the maneuver for an actual retreat, and sent some of his own men to

support his nephew. The attack was thus repulsed, but the weakening of the center by the withdrawals had not gone unnoticed and presently a new assault was made upon the Sultan's own. The infantry of the Franks had no sooner come up to the Moslem line than they opened their ranks and let the knights charge. The men of Diarbekr and Mosul could not stand against these panoplied warriors and were soon in full flight, with the knights hotly pursuing. The whole right wing fell into panic and it looked as though the day would end in rout. Saladin, seeking to check the flight, found himself left with only five men of his whole bodyguard.

The victorious knights, having chased the Moslems into their camp, and disported themselves in the very tent of the Sultan, suddenly woke up to find they had not been followed by their companions and, in fact, had cut themselves off from their army. It was necessary to get back and this they proceeded to do.

In the meantime, the army of the Sultan was getting back into shape. Both right and left wings were untouched, and Saladin had recovered his grip. As the knights came rushing past the Moslems wanted to attack them, but Saladin held them like so many dogs straining at the leash. It was one of those moments when he shone at his best, when he would turn upon the seemingly victorious enemy and completely upset them.

The knights were allowed to take their way unimpeded until they had almost passed out of danger.

Then Saladin, raising his cry of "On for Islam!" hurled his men at their backs with irresistible impetus. A number of the knights went down. More Moslems joined in the attack and more knights were unhorsed and slain. Panic seized upon the nearby Franks, and attacks from Taki ed-din spread it down the line. Presently the whole Christian army was in retreat to its camp, with the victorious Moslems in pursuit. Only the aid of a contingent left to guard this prevented it from being overrun.

The losses of the Franks were the greatest they had sustained since the Battle of Hattin. Twenty of the Knights Templar alone had been killed, among them the Grand Master. Gerard de Rideford would no longer stir up strife between his own or plant the virus of revenge in the bosom of the enemy. In his death, at least, he showed a fine nobility. When he was urged to save himself by flight he is quoted as replying:

"God forbid that men should say of me, to the shame of our order, that to save my own life I fled away, leaving my fellows dead behind me."

The King saved his lukewarm ally, Conrad of Montferrat, in the melée, and James of Avesnes got away on the horse of a subordinate, who sacrificed himself for his master. But there were many other knights left on the bloody field, together with thousands of common soldiers. Whether the Moslem report of only one hundred and fifty dead is correct or not, their losses were small in comparison.

One fact alone dampened the rejoicing of the Mos-

lems that night. As they returned to their camp, elated with their triumph over the foes of Islam, they found they had been undone by their own. The camp servants, seeing the flight of the men of Mosul and Diarbekr, the onset of the Christian knights and then their withdrawal, concluded that the Sultan had been defeated and that the baggage in the camp was fair booty for the first-comer. So they had plundered thoroughly and were well on their way to Damascus when the worn-out though exultant warriors came in, hoping to celebrate at their ease. Their chagrin and anger must have outrun all their sense of victory. The booty they had been saving for their return to their homes, clothes, arms, money and whatnot, was all gone.

Knowing his men, Saladin lost no time in despatching messengers after the absconders, and these were fortunate enough to overtake the fugitives before they could deposit their takings. The Sultan seated himself before his tent, with his chief aids around him, and saw the booty deposited in great heaps before him. Then all the soldiers came up and identified their belongings and went off with them rejoicing. "The gathering was like a close-thronged market — never had so great a multitude been collected together." In spite of Saladin's fatigue he "displayed the greatest resolution and good humor, with unruffled serenity and a discrimination that was never at fault."

A few days later Saladin called his emirs into council and addressed them thus:

"In the name of God! Praise be to God! May the

blessing of God rest upon his messenger! The enemies of God and of our race invaded our land and trampled the soil of Islam under their feet, but already we see a foreshadowing of the triumph with which we shall overcome them, if it be God's will. There remain but a small number of our enemies. Now is the time to exterminate them utterly. I take God to witness that that is now our duty.

"You know that the only reinforcements we can expect are those that el-Melek el-Adel is now bringing us. There is the enemy. If we leave them in peace, and they remain there till the sea is open for ships, they will receive large reinforcements. The opinion I hold, and which seems to me decidedly the best, is that we should attack them forthwith. But let each of you say what he thinks."

Wise and prophetic words, but the emirs were at odds about accepting them. They were of the opinion that the first thing to do was to move the camp to the healthier site of el-Kharruba. Then the men ought to have time to recover their strength and the horses also. For fifty days they had been under arms and in the saddle. Rest would revive their spirits. In the meantime el-Adel would come to advise with them and the deserters would be brought back.

"The Sultan at this time was suffering from a serious indisposition, brought on by the anxiety which oppressed him, and also by the weight of his armor, which he had now worn for a long time. Therefore he was persuaded, in the end, to adopt this counsel."

Thus Beha ed-din explains Saladin's surrender to his emirs. Next to the errors at Tyre it was the greatest mistake in his career. The shrunken army of the Franks, depressed by defeat, lay there at their mercy. Overcome, the menace of invasion from Europe was tremendously lessened. Tyre again became a comparatively easy prey. At another time the learned Cadi quotes the Prophet as saying: "Among my people there are some who can decide and speak, and Omar is one of them." Omar had spoken, but unfortunately he had not prevailed, nor was he strong enough then to overcome opposition.

About this time a report came in that the German Emperor was on his way with a great force and the Sultan despatched messengers in every direction to induce the governors of all the provinces to send what reinforcements they could raise for the spring campaign. In the meantime he marched into Acre in state, intending to remain there himself through the winter, while he dismissed those troops not needed to hold the city.

During the long inclement months he was not idle. Beha ed-din had been despatched to the Caliph of Bagdad to secure his aid and orders had been sent to his lieutenants in Egypt to build a fleet which could be brought to Acre when the weather permitted. At the same time supplies of all kinds were rushed into the besieged city, the defenses were improved and engines of war constructed to counteract those of the enemy. When spring arrived, and it was again possible

for troops to move without being mired in mud, Acre was in as perfect condition to resist assault as it was possible to put it.

With the calming of the Mediterranean came further supplies and reinforcements. Beha ed-din's embassy had been most successful. A special ambassador from the Caliph, a young man descended from the Prophet, brought a body of experts skilled in the throwing of naphtha, together with a considerable supply of that product. There was also a warrant authorizing the Sultan to borrow twenty thousand gold pieces from the merchants, chargeable to the Caliph, but Saladin was too wary to use this. Always averse to raising taxes, he was not inclined to burden the local commerce with what might look like a mere advance to the Caliph, which experience suggested might resolve itself into an additional impost.

Troops now came pouring in from all sides. Some, like those led from Aleppo by el-Melek ez-Zaher, were in such fine condition the Sultan paraded them before the camp of the Franks, to give them an idea of what they might expect to encounter. The army was moved nearer to the city, to be ready to meet any sudden effort to storm the latter, and the Sultan devoted himself to getting better acquainted with his new levies, and to win their personal affection, after his usual fashion, by generous gifts and kindly attentions.

He was missing no chance of inspiring loyalty and good will both among the troops and their leaders. As the latter arrived they were received with the most flattering marks of personal affection and respect.

Saladin's own preference for simplicity was forgotten while high honors were showered upon these welcome visitors. First the cadis and secretaries were trotted out to pay their respects. Then came the sons of the Sultan, themselves high commanders and lords of cities and provinces. Finally came the Sultan himself with warm greeting. The troops were drawn up in line of battle, with all banners flying. Sometimes the Sultan even rode out from the camp with a guard of honor to meet the new arrival beyond the camp.

The Prince of Sinjar found a magnificent banquet waiting in the Sultan's tent, and a satin cloth laid for him to walk upon. He alone received a cushion identical with that reserved for the Sultan, and the gifts showered upon him were " so rare and curious " they beggared the Cadi's powers of description. The Lord of Jezirat, nephew of the Prince, was likewise overwhelmed with gifts and honors, and had a special tent assigned him next to that of his uncle. The son of Masud, Prince of Mosul, received " a magnificent present," and his tent was placed between those of the Sultan's two sons.

Several incidents occurred during the spring to hearten the Sultan. The garrison at Belfort finally surrendered to get its lord out of prison. The fleet arrived from Egypt and defeated that of the Franks sent out into the bay to intercept it, after a hot fight. It brought fresh supplies, which heartened the garrison at Acre considerably. The menace of three huge towers on wheels, each of which held about five hundred

men and was topped by a mangonel, the mere sight of which had inspired terror in the defenders as they were moved up close to the walls, was overcome by the ingenuity of a common soldier from Damascus.

Throughout the siege new engines of war were being improvised, by both sides, and each of them aroused the greatest dread in the opposing camp, but apparently none was viewed with such fear as these. Even as Saladin had been busy throughout the winter preparing for the renewal of the fighting in the spring, so had the Franks been also, and these great towers were among the products of their industry. As they overtopped the walls of the city and could not be destroyed by the usual methods, there was plenty of foundation for the alarm of the Moslems. "They inspired them with a terror that defies description," declared Beha ed-din, "and they gave up all hope of being able to save the city." The Sultan called together his throwers of naphtha, and promised them great rewards if they destroyed the towers, but all their efforts were in vain. The raw hide, soaked in wine and vinegar, with which these structures were faced could not be started even by the flaming shafts. It seemed indeed that at last the Franks had found an indestructible means of assault.

It was then that the young Damascan, a maker of cauldrons in times of peace, offered to set the towers on fire if they would furnish him with certain materials. What these were has not been made known, but his boast was not an idle one. Having boiled his ma-

terials in naphtha, he placed them a-flame in copper pots, which were thrown against the towers, and one after another, as they were struck, these burst into flames which could not be extinguished. In a very short time nothing remained of the great structures but embers and molten metal.

However, important as was this destruction of the towers, and the repulse of other engines of menacing character, including some specially designed rams and a fire boat, which was aimed at the Tower of Flies and looked as though it might remove that important harbor defense, these were after all mere incidents in a long siege, and in nowise removed the larger danger which threatened the city. The Franks were still in their camp before its walls, and their intrenchments had been strengthened and enlarged during the winter. Then, off in the distance, but approaching ever nearer, was the vast army of the Emperor Frederick, while the English and French were gradually composing their differences and reaching agreement for a common descent upon the Holy Land.

From Saladin's agents, and from the Armenian Catholicos, came information of the advance of the Germans. A letter of the Catholicos was most explicit. It told of their advance through Hungary and the Greek dominions, of their arrival at Iconium and alliance with Kilij Arslan, and of the death of Frederick after an imprudent plunge into the cold water of a stream along his line of march. While a large part of the German army had melted away, there was

still a strong force under the command of Frederick's younger son, which was moving on to its goal.

There was plenty of justification in this letter for the alarm felt by the Sultan and his emirs. The German forces were put at forty-two thousand horsemen and a large number of foot soldiers, equipped with all sorts of arms. The new commander held them under rigid discipline and compelled the country through which they were passing to provide the supplies they required. The spirit of duty controlled all, and the slightest indulgence met with severe punishment. "Any one who disgraced himself was slaughtered like a sheep," and a chief who had beaten a servant unjustly was sentenced to death. The picture presented was that of a vast army marching like Spartans to the execution of a determined purpose. Much later Saladin received a letter from the Greek Emperor which had quite a different tone. It assured the Sultan there was no cause to fear this invasion, for the Germans were worn out and incapable of fighting, their numbers reduced to a mere fraction, and these inadequately armed. But when these tidings arrived the mischief had already been done.

A considerable part of the Sultan's army, including the fine troops under Taki ed-din and those from Aleppo, were despatched to meet the Germans as the result of a council of the emirs held after the receipt of the letter from Catholicos. Consequently only a weakened army remained to confront the Franks, and, although these suffered a serious defeat in an encounter with the troops under el-Adel — "the sword of

God did execution upon them, separating their souls from their bodies, and severing their heads from their shoulders," so that at least four thousand were killed, and Beha ed-din, passing through "a sea of blood" on his mule, could not count the number of the dead — the Christian camp remained undisturbed.

For some time thereafter there were only minor skirmishes, with occasional encouragement for both sides. A sortie from the city succeeded in penetrating the camp of the Franks, destroying a number of mangonels and taking some prisoners of rank. By a cunning stratagem some Moslems brought a ship from Beirut to run the blockade which was threatening a famine for the garrison. Dressed like Franks, and having shaved their beards, they boldly sailed into the midst of the blockading squadron. The final stroke of placing pigs upon the bridge completed the deception.

Evidently this was a friendly ship which did not know that Acre was still in Moslem hands, so the situation was explained to them. "Very well," returned the disguised Moslems, "we will make for the camp, but there is still another ship close behind us, coming on with the same wind; you must warn them not to enter the harbor." Sure enough, another ship was to be seen in the distance, and the Franks set out to warn its commander. Taking advantage of a favorable breeze, the Moslems escaped into the harbor.

A daring feat, splendidly executed, and the garrison was the richer for four hundred sacks of corn and a quantity of cheese, onions, sheep and other victuals

— the pigs, of course, had served their purpose and were of no further use; but what did it avail, after all? — neither that nor any of the desperate sorties from the city, nor brilliant attacks from the Sultan's army.

Over in Europe mournful priests were carrying from town to town a huge picture painted by order of the Marquess of Montferrat, representing the city of Jerusalem. There could be seen the Church of the Resurrection, with a Moslem horseman trampling the tomb of Christ and his horse desecrating it. Others carried a picture of the Savior showing bleeding wounds said to have been inflicted by the Saracens. What difference did the loss of a few thousands make, when the whole Western world was pouring out its treasure in men and materials to avenge these wrongs? It was only necessary for the besiegers to hold their camp intact.

The Sultan knew well enough. In increasing number his letters calling for further reinforcements went out to the governors. All Islam was besought, reproached, threatened. Where was the spirit of the Moslems? Let them look at the enemy, who spared neither themselves nor their treasure. He might have added, let them look at him, worn with fatigue, anxiety and ill almost unto death. He was sparing himself least of all.

The King of Sinjar, wearied with the war, the same noble who had been received so royally by the Sultan, flatly disobeyed the latter's orders and left the camp. Only through the intervention of Taki ed-din, who

found him on the road, and compelled him to return by threat of force, was he induced to go back. Usually, remarked the Sultan, his experience had shown that charges made against men were greatly exaggerated, but in this instance they had understated the facts. Shortly thereafter, Imad ed-din, uncle of the young deserter, was likewise threatening to leave. In his own hand Saladin wrote this message: "I should like to know what advantage it would be to you to lose the support of a man like me." The implied threat had effect, but these two instances only showed what the Sultan had to contend with in his own camp.

All this time he was suffering great pain, yet he continued to lead his troops, and the only time he could not do this his secretary records he saw tears of vexation coursing down his cheeks. At one time his whole body down to his waist was covered with throbbing postules, and he was unable to sit long enough to eat, yet he managed to get into his saddle and remained there a whole morning actively engaged. To the expostulating cadi and his physician he replied indifferently that he did not notice the pain so much when he was mounted.

But he had no thought of giving in, even with conditions growing steadily worse. Never had he shown more patience or fortitude. Nor were these shaken when Henry of Troyes, Count of Champagne, arrived with large supplies of food and arms for the opposing forces and ten thousand men. Nor later still, when the dreaded Germans, dwindled to a mere thousand, came

into the camp. The European vanguard only, all these. An English fleet arrives at Tyre, with more supplies and additional men, under Ranulf de Glanville, with Baldwin, Archbishop of Canterbury, and Hubert Walter, Bishop of Salisbury, to give it the right spirit. They are but the precursors of the Kings of France and England, now actually on their way.

If there is discouragement among the emirs, these new arrivals find conditions none too good in the Christian camp. Saladin would very likely have been cheered could he have read the pronouncement of the chaplain of the Archbishop:

"We found our army (I say it with grief and groaning) given up to shameful practices, and yielding to ease and lust rather than encouraging virtue. The Lord is not in the camp; there is none that doeth good. The chiefs envy one another, and strive for privilege. The lesser folk are in want and find no one to help them. In the camp there is neither chastity, sobriety, faith, nor charity. . . . The Turks are besieging us, and daily do they challenge us and persist in attacking us, while our knights lie skulking within their tents. . . . Saladin's strength is increasing daily, whereas our army daily grows smaller."

Saladin had withdrawn his army from the malarial plain, so he could communicate with Acre only by pigeon or the skilful Arab divers, who carried messages by swimming between the city and the Sultan's forces, but he was watching the enemy closely, prepared to meet any sortie from their camp. His opportunity came when a large body of the enemy came out

to get provisions from Haifa. They were disappointed in this, but a fight ensued which lasted for several days, with severer losses to the Franks than to the Moslems.

A little later on another foray of Franks was caught in ambush, and a number of men of rank, including the treasurer of the French king, were taken prisoner. Ill as he was, Saladin was not to be cheated of the opportunity to show that he was still a *bon chevalier*. All these men were taken to his tent, where he inquired as to their standing, and "clad them in robes of honor. He gave a furred robe of the first class to the commander of the King of France's troops, and on all the others, without exception, he bestowed a Jerkh fur, for they were suffering greatly from the cold, which was at that time very severe." A banquet was spread and a special tent erected for them. Later they were allowed to write to their friends and to send to their camp for their belongings. Finally they were supplied with good horses to carry them to Damascus, where they were treated at all times like honored guests rather than as prisoners of war.

A pleasant interlude in times that tried the Sultan's soul. To the Cadi, ever watchful of his master, who protested against his exposing himself when he was so ill, he replied lightly in the words of a distinguished Moslem soldier, who called upon his friends in the midst of a death struggle with his adversary, Malek el-Ashter, "Kill me and Malek; kill Malek with me!" He, too, would welcome death could he but destroy the enemy at the same time.

CHAPTER TWENTY

SALADIN AND RICHARD

As though Fate had meant to cast a high light upon the character of the Moslem chieftain, it brought Richard the Lion-Hearted into the forefront of the opposition. At the climax of the Sultan's career these two champions of opposing faiths and contrasting civilizations were brought into direct conflict and, though they never met personally, from that moment, until Richard left the Holy Land, it was the personal contest between them, a matching of wits as well as arms, which controlled the varying issues of the war between Islam and Christianity. Philip of France and other great nobles played their part on the side of the Cross, as did el-Adel and Taki ed-din, for the honor of the Prophet, but theirs were minor roles, after all.

Admittedly, Richard was the beau ideal of the Christian knight. His tawny head — "his hair was half way between red and yellow" — suggested his sobriquet as much as his headlong valor supported it. A giant of a man, with long arms to swing a mighty sword, and long legs to carry a weighty body, he "far surpassed other men in the courtesy of his manners and the vastness of his strength." The admiring chron-

icler of his voyage from England remarked, "This, too, was a wonderful thing, that the King was no less hearty and healthy, strong and hale, light and active, on sea than he was wont to be on land. From this I conclude that there was not any man in the world stronger than he, either on land or sea."

Brave to rashness, of extraordinary skill and prowess in personal combat, impudent and autocratic, as became the omnipotent king anointed of God, his mere appearance before an enemy was equal in intimidation to a whole regiment of ordinary belted knights. To the Saracens, not easily affrighted, he appeared well nigh supernatural.

"Do you think that King Richard is on the track that you spring so wildly from it?" the Moslem rider would demand of his unruly horse.

Even before his arrival at Acre he had become a menace by the mere threat of it, for his reputation had long preceded him. No sooner was he there than he became both a scourge and a legend. Before his departure he had ridden unattended along the whole front of the Moslem army, shaking a challenging lance, and of all the daring warriors of Islam not one had responded. To be sure, they were in a rebellious mood that day, and their silence may have been primarily due to their anger at the Sultan, but Richard knew naught of that, and his insolent daring was not inspired thereby.

Saladin's courage was no less genuine. Almost

always before a battle he could be seen riding calmly between the armies, surveying the field. Although a target for the enemy's sharpshooters, he was apparently oblivious of all danger. "In the height of the fighting he used to pass between the two lines of battle. . . . He would make his way in front of his own troops from the right wing to the left, intent on the marshalling of his battalions, calling them up to the front, and stationing them in positions which he deemed advantageous. . . ." That required a steadfast heart, too, but it was not so theatric nor so picturesque.

Otherwise the methods of the two commanders are also dissimilar. Richard is forever in the forefront of battle, the actual leader of his troops, and his sword is red with the blood of his foes, whereas Saladin only fights in person when he has to lead a forlorn hope. His is more the attitude of the modern commander, organizer and director of others, watchful of the changing fortunes of the battle and ever alert to throw his forces where they will have the most telling effect.

After the campaign was ended he expressed his opinion of Richard's headlong rashness to the Bishop of Salisbury in these words:

"He often incurs unnecessary danger and is too prodigal of his life. Now I, for my part, however great a King I might be, would much rather be gifted with wisdom and moderation than with boldness and immoderation."

It was this same bishop, a man of high reputation

for wisdom, who summed up his judgment of the two princes in this declaration:

"If any one could give your noble qualities to King Richard and his to you, so that each of you might be endowed with the faculties of the other, then the whole world could not furnish two such princes."

In his preface to "The Talisman," Scott makes another comparison of the two monarchs: "The period was that at which the warlike character of Richard I, wild and generous, a pattern of chivalry with all its extravagant virtues and its no less absurd errors, was opposed to that of Saladin, in which the Christian and English monarch showed all the cruelty and violence of an Eastern Sultan, and Saladin, on the other hand, displayed the deep policy and prudence of a European sovereign, whilst each contended which should excel the other in the knightly qualities of bravery and generosity."

Richard reached the camp on June 8, 1191. "He brought five and twenty galleys with him," wrote Beha ed-din, "filled with men, arms and stores," and had just dealt the Moslems a body blow by sinking a large ship filled with much needed stores and provisions. "The Franks were filled with so great a joy at his arrival that they lit huge and terrible fires that night in their camp — a sure sign of the important support he had brought them. Their leaders had oftentimes boasted to us that he would come, and held his arrival as a menace over our heads; and now, according to the people who frequented their camp, they ex-

pected, the very moment he landed, to see him fulfil their dearest wish of pushing forward with the siege of the city. This prince, indeed, was justly distinguished for his good judgment and wide experience, for his extreme daring and insatiable ambition. Therefore, when the Moslems heard of his arrival, they were filled with terror and alarm."

King Philip had come some months earlier, and his arrival had given the besiegers great encouragement. Nor had he been remiss in pressing the siege, but all that was as nothing compared to the influence of Richard's appearance. And well might it have been, for from that time the siege took on a new character and a spirit of overwhelming confidence was observable in the Christian camp. Although Richard speedily was seized with the local fever, and often unable to take part in the campaign, and though the rivalries and jealousies between him and Philip interfered with harmonious leadership, the master hand held control and even the zealous Cadi could read the handwriting of doom on the walls of the battered city.

Unremittingly the Franks now plied their engines of war, and as fast as the ingenuity of the Moslems destroyed these new ones were erected. Richard devised some of the best of these, and had himself taken on a silken couch to watch their working. From his sick bed he himself worked a crossbow with telling effect.

With equal zeal and ardor the Sultan led attack upon attack against the Christian camp. Never had he worked so hard, so unflaggingly or with greater in-

spiration. Never had he exhibited such infinite patience or more indomitable will. Through a whole day of fierce fighting he remained in the saddle without a mouthful of food, taking only the medicine his physician forced upon him. Had the war been limited to the two opposing forces it is doubtful who would have been the winner. His burning messages had finally had their effect and his army was gradually brought into splendid shape.

But there was Acre under constant attack, the garrison under assault by day and by night, its fighters called upon to remove the corpses of men and horses from moat and fosse, to repair the growing breaches in barbican and inner walls, to snatch sleep amid continual alarms, to battle often on empty bellies. Ever and again supplies were smuggled in, and the signal of the city's drum would always be responded to promptly by the Sultan's attack upon the besiegers, both within and outside their camp, but the long continued strain was wearing down the powers of resistance of the besieged.

From the first Richard indicated the wish to meet his opponent. Two weeks after his arrival, after a fierce fight between the two armies outside the Christian camp, in which neither had prevailed, a messenger came to el-Adel with the request that he be taken before the Sultan. Apparently Richard had discovered that the Sultan's brother was more pliable than the Sultan, and from this time forward the English king almost invariably addressed himself to the former.

When the messenger was received by Saladin he

announced that he came in behalf of Richard to ask that an interview be arranged between the two. Saladin evidently suspected his adversary, whose reputation for cunning and artifice had spread even to the East, and seemed to be fearful he might be placed at a disadvantage in a personal interview. A man of the Sultan's dignity and politeness could not fail to take umbrage should the English monarch indulge in one of his not infrequent outbursts of insolence and brutality, and thereafter all further negotiations between the two would be impossible, thus putting off all chance of real peace. Saladin's words indicated that some such thought was in his mind.

"It is not customary," said he, "for kings to meet, unless they have previously laid the foundations of a treaty. For, after they have spoken together and given one another the tokens of mutual confidence that are natural in such circumstances, it is not seemly for them to make war upon one another. It is therefore absolutely essential that the preliminaries should be arranged first of all, and that a trustworthy interpreter should act as our intermediary to explain to each of us what the other says. As soon as the preliminaries are settled, the interview, please God, shall take place."

This message did not receive a fitting response, nor ameliorate the relations between the enemies; for after an attack on the Moslem camp a few days later a Moslem prisoner was killed and burned within sight of his comrades, an act followed immediately by one of similar ferocity on the part of the Moslems.

There are indications that Richard was exercising a cynical humor in all his dealings with the Saracen chiefs, and particularly so with the Sultan. Relentless in pressing every opportunity to injure the enemy, he continued to make a show of friendliness, and did not hesitate to ask for all sorts of favors. Saladin, though not a whit deceived, responded with unruffled courtesy to these demands. Iced sherbets, snow from the mountains and fruit are freely supplied at Richard's request, and once, when he sent word to el-Adel that he would fain be beguiled by some Saracen music, of the beauty of which he had heard great praise, a skilled singer was sent to his tent, where she performed at length, accompanying herself on the guitar. Richard condescended to express great pleasure at this courtesy.

Returning to the proposed interview with the Sultan, Richard again despatched his messenger, this time again to el-Melek, to deny a report that the other Christian princes had intervened, feeling that such an interview could only be harmful to their interests. "Do not believe the reports that have been spread as to the cause of my enforced delay," wrote the King. "I am answerable to my self alone for what I may do. I am master of my actions, and no one has any authority over me. But, during the last few days, I have been prevented from doing anything at all by sickness. That alone has caused the delay. It is the custom of kings, when they happen to be near one another, to send each other mutual presents and gifts. Now I have

in my possession a gift worthy of the Sultan's acceptance, and I ask permission to send it to him."

El-Melek replied that the gift would be accepted, provided the King would accept one of equal value from the Sultan. He need not have made any conditions, for all this was just persiflage, which became evident immediately when the messenger intimated that Richard was considering sending some fine falcons from overseas, but they were weak at the moment and needed some birds or fowls to revive them. That is, Richard was looking for a few nice chickens for his table. El-Melek understood. However, Richard did send a Moslem prisoner later, whereat the Sultan decorated the messenger with a robe of honor. These visits were understood to be in the nature of espionage, and there is reason to believe the Sultan dressed the scene to his advantage before the messenger was permitted to enter the camp.

But Richard held the whip hand and knew it. Slowly but unmistakably the resistance of the wearied garrison of Acre was lessening, and though the Sultan sought to distract the attention of the Franks by fierce charges upon their camp, the bull dog tenacity of the English king never relaxed. The Sultan, " restless as a mother weeping for her lost child, . . . his eyes full of tears, went from battalion to battalion, crying, 'On for Islam!' " but all in vain. A letter from the doomed city told of the complete exhaustion of its defenders, who would have to capitulate, and would only ask for their lives from the victors.

This was a terrible blow to Saladin. Here he was with all the best troops of Islam, soldiers from Jerusalem, Damascus, Aleppo, Egypt and other Moslem centers, all eager to fight now, and yet he was helpless to avert this great loss. In fact, even while he was making his last desperate plans an embassy from the city was endeavoring to come to terms with the French King. Seif ed-din el-Meshtub, its leader, addressed the monarch in these words:

"We have taken cities from you, and, even when we carried them by storm, we have been accustomed to grant terms to the vanquished, and we have had them taken to the places in which they wished to take refuge, treating them with all kindness. We, then, will surrender the city to you if you will grant us terms." To which the King replied haughtily: "Those you took were our servants and slaves. You are likewise our slaves. We shall see what we will do."

When the Emir returned to Acre with this rebuff, three of his associates were so terrified they seized a boat and escaped to the Sultan's camp, where they hid, knowing they would receive slight consideration were they discovered by him. One was caught and put into chains. However, a spirit of mutiny showed itself in his own camp, and when he ordered the troops the next day to take spades and tools, intending to wreck the enemy trenches, they refused, crying out: "You will destroy all Islam, and there is no good in that."

Still Saladin fought on, bringing his men back under control again. His money hired a new body of Tur-

comans, and the Prince of Sheyzar arrived with fresh reinforcements. The garrison was heartened momentarily likewise by a mysterious phenomenon. A strange noise was heard within the city, like the marching of many men, and this had penetrated even to the ears of the besiegers, who sent one of their number to inquire how many fresh recruits had been received. "A thousand horse soldiers," replied the guard. "Nay," returned the Frank, "not so many as that. I saw them myself. They were clad in green."

Green! That was the garb of the martyrs of Islam in Paradise, so the very spirits were fighting for the city! For a brief interval there was a flicker of hope, and when the Sultan sent word he would make a strong night attack upon the enemy camp, and directed the garrison to make a sortie at the same time, it looked as though there might be a chance.

Perhaps there really was, but it was allowed to pass untaken. Ibn el-Athir tells how Saladin had ordered the garrison to leave everything and make a sortie in full force, following the shore, he engaging to bring his troops to the side of the town where they were to issue, attacking the besiegers to occupy them while their two forces united to make a joint assault. But, at the last moment, the soldiers in the town were so occupied in assembling their belongings they were not ready to move until dawn, by which time the enemy had learned of the plan and were prepared. It was another of the occasions when the Moslem soldiers could not be brought to abandon their possessions.

The bane of loot was many times the cause of their undoing.

Finally the town surrendered — a fact which the Sultan learned only after the event. A diver, who had swum from the city, brought him the letter telling of the terms arranged by the chief emir, Almechtoub. Besides the surrender of the city with all it contained, its engines of war, stores and ships, the Franks were to receive two hundred thousand gold dinars, one hundred prisoners of rank and five hundred ordinary, and the Holy Cross. This is the statement of Beha ed-din. Other authorities assert that the garrison was to be held as hostages for the payments and that the Sultan was called upon to surrender two hundred knights and fifteen hundred other Christian prisoners. He was dismayed and did not want to agree. He did not get any help from the emirs he consulted, and had fully resolved to send a letter expressing his formal disapproval when the banners of the Franks were hoisted on the walls. The two years' siege of Acre ended on July 12, 1191 against the protests of the commander-in-chief of the defending army.

And now Richard was guilty of an atrocity which all the troubadors and poets who have made him their hero could not wipe out. There were difficulties in the way of carrying out all the provisions of the capitulation, and Saladin asked for an extension of time, particularly as to the surrender of certain of the Christian prisoners. It had been agreed that the stipulations of the treaty should be carried out in three monthly

instalments. The first was met promptly, but when it came to the second certain of the prisoners named by the Franks had not yet been found, at which Richard's agents protested. Saladin, after explaining his difficulty, proposed two solutions. Either the Moslem prisoners were to be released, whereupon the instalment of money then due would be paid and hostages furnished for the fulfilment of the conditions not yet acquitted, or the instalment would be paid provided the Franks gave hostages for the carrying out of their part of the bargain. Considering the number of times the Franks had violated their promises this seemed fair enough, but no reply was made to these propositions. A week later three thousand of the Moslem prisoners at Acre were marched out on the plain and massacred in cold blood, only those of position, who might be ransomed later, being excepted.

"According to some," wrote the Cadi, "the prisoners were killed to avenge the deaths of those slain previously by the Moslems; others say that the King of England, having made up his mind to try and take Ascalon, did not think it prudent to leave so many prisoners behind in Acre. God knows what his reason really was."

Perhaps it is not surprising that for some time thereafter Saladin displayed an unwonted harshness in dealing with Christian captives, and that not a few of these were summarily decapitated.

CHAPTER TWENTY–ONE

DESTRUCTION OF ASCALON

HAVING placed a garrison in charge of Acre, Richard set out with his army along the coast, apparently with the intention of marching upon Jerusalem. The Sultan followed, and the two armies were within striking distance of each other for a long time, with the Moslems seeking to provoke a battle all along. From Saladin to the lowest private in the ranks they were in bitter mood.

Nothing shows more clearly the perfect discipline of Richard's army than the accounts of the Arab chroniclers of this march through the heat of the summer. Day after day the Arab cavalry pursued its tantalizing tactics of charging like the wind, letting fly a cloud of arrows, and disappearing as they had come. Yet the Franks pursued the even tenor of their way, doggedly keeping to their pace, the horsemen within the screen of foot soldiers, apparently indifferent to the assaults. Apparently, too, these did little damage, even the infantry being well protected by their thick gambesons and hauberks. The Cadi tells of seeing soldiers "with from one to ten arrows sticking in them" marching on, apparently not inconvenienced.

Saladin, still suffering from colic and fever, but so consumed with anxiety and eager desire to punish the enemy he took no heed of his physical weakness, kept his troops on the hills above the line of march of the Franks, watching like a hawk for the opportunity to take advantage of every favorable turn. Provisions had become extremely scarce and on several occasions, when the army made camp there was no bread at all. At others the prices had risen so high they were prohibitive, but Saladin, with his usual reckless generosity, appeased his men by lavish distributions of gold.

Occasionally he was able to overcome the enemy's persistent disregard of his attacks, the ensuing conflicts resulting in losses on both sides, and finally, on the seventh of September, a major contest ensued near Arsuf, on the way from Caesarea to Jaffa. Saladin's object was to halt the rear portion of Richard's army, thus dividing this in two.

The Sultan was everywhere, urging on his men, and the victory seemed to be with the Moslems, when some of the Knights Hospitallers, refusing to heed longer Richard's command to remain quiescent, turned unexpectedly.

"I myself," wrote the Cadi, "saw their knights gathered together in the midst of a protecting circle of infantry. They put their lances in rest, uttered a mighty war cry, and the ranks of infantry parted to allow them to pass. Then they rushed out, and charged in all directions. One division hurled itself on our right wing, another on our left and a

THE BATTLE OF ARSUF

Fought on the Eve of the Nativity of the Blessed Mary
(September 7, 1191)

third on our center, throwing our whole force into confusion."

This counter-attack only anticipated Richard's intentions, and with its manifest success he rushed to the front, adding the weight of his own personality to the irresistible onslaught of these powerful warriors. The defeat of the Moslems became a rout and, do what he could, Saladin was unable to stop the flight of his men. It was only Richard's fear that an ambush might be waiting his men in the woods that stopped the pursuit.

Though greatly depressed by this defeat, Saladin made an effort the next day to draw the enemy on again, but Richard was once more marching on, his forces in close formation, and paid no heed to the challenge. It was the last effort to bring on a conflict at this time, and, while Richard took his army to Jaffa, Saladin went on to Ascalon, leaving part of his forces under el-Adel to mask the enemy.

He had now definitely decided to destroy Ascalon, lest it should fall into Richard's hands and become a base for his attack upon Jerusalem, with a possible cutting of communication with Egypt. As he came in sight of the city he said to Beha ed-din: "I take God to witness I would rather lose all my children than cast down a single stone from the walls, but God wills it. It is necessary for the Moslem cause."

Ascalon was a strongly fortified and prosperous city, beautiful to behold, and the Sultan's decision was as painful to all Moslem hearts as it was to his.

Of course, they were not consulted. War has never given much thought to the civilian, and even Saladin, considerate as he was, would have been surprised had any one suggested that the peaceable population of Ascalon had any rights in the matter.

The governor of the town, one of Saladin's mamelukes, was sent for and directed to assemble all the workmen and begin at once the difficult task of taking down the walls, for these were built for all time, and were reinforced with towers whose walls were as thick " as a lance is long." We have here a picture of a city whose life had been going along pleasantly and with reasonable security being suddenly given over to ruthless destroyers.

Everything is disrupted as in the twinkling of an eye. The population which has gathered joyfully to hail the great Sultan learns that he is come not to heal but to destroy. Men who have rushed forward to acclaim are drawn to take part in the fearful work. From all sides rise lamentation and protest. Wealthy burghers find themselves plunged into poverty, for the torch will be applied to their costly homes and there is no one to buy their luxurious furnishings. Their business is done for, and their wares are a drug in a market where the buyers are few and every man is glad to sacrifice for one dirhem what cost him ten. The sheltered inmates of beautiful harems must go forth into the rough world in search of whatever refuge Fate may have in store for them. Nor is there time to dally and consider. The danger of interference from

the Franks makes it necessary to push the work with all possible haste. "This was a horrible time, during which terrible things occurred," wrote Beha ed-din. "Numbers were obliged to depart on foot, having no money to hire beasts to carry them." Some set out for Syria, others for Egypt.

While the uprooting of the city was under way the Sultan received a letter from el-Adel describing an interview with Richard's ambassadors, who had come to him to discuss terms of peace. He had also had a talk with the son of Humphrey of Toron, who had suggested as the basis for peace that the Sultan surrender all the cities in the districts along the coast.

Nothing illustrates better the state of Saladin's mind than the fact that he was willing to accept this suggestion. A short time before he had rejected it with scorn. But his resolution was at its weakest just then. His men were worn and weary of fighting and, what was equally depressing, they had been compelled to abandon much of their possessions. "Broken down by neediness," the Cadi said. Very likely, Saladin was doubtful just then of how much he could rely upon them. Otherwise he would not have replied to his brother to enter into negotiations, giving him full power to "make such terms as should seem best to him." It was not like the Sultan to surrender into other hands the final word.

The enemy was busy repairing the fortifications of Jaffa — and enjoying the pleasures it afforded; which, according to their own chroniclers, were not such as

Crusaders, sworn to rescue the holy places from the infidel, should have indulged in. Apparently, they were not immune to the influence of the East and their appearance, garlanded with flowers, in the company of the bawdy women who followed them from Acre, suggested the old Bacchanalian revels.

El-Adel wrote from his camp of observation that Richard was unaware of what was going on at Ascalon, and he was prolonging the negotiations to permit of the finishing of that work. This news only increased the Sultan's determination. He now supervised the work personally, going from group to group of workmen, giving directions and offering rewards for increased effort. He was on horseback all the time and the result of his exertions was an illness which laid him low for some days. More than a month was consumed in leveling the walls, and even then the Hospitallers' Tower, strong as a castle, remained untouched. Neither pick nor other tool had any effect and only after it had been subjected to the influence of fire for two days did the stone become friable enough to be dislodged. When this had been accomplished Saladin left Ascalon and went to consult with his brother.

His purpose was to check the foraging parties of the enemy and, incidentally, to destroy some more towns which might become strongholds of the Franks. The Castle of Ramleh and Lydda was the first of these. It was then the period of fasting, the month of Ramadan, and Moslems could not eat before sunset, but this did not seem to interfere with the work of demolition. The

Sultan visited the works every evening and had a meal served after the evening prayer.

Quite suddenly he decided to visit Jerusalem. This, after all, was the goal of all Richard's efforts, and the fear that he might reach it was at the base of Saladin's anxieties. Having turned the command over to el-Adel, he went off secretly with a small guard, and reached Jerusalem the following day. After a careful inspection of the defenses, he decided the walls must be strengthened and the moats widened. His nervous apprehensions may be judged from the fact he was not content to supervise and instruct, as usual, but felt impelled to take part in the actual labor. In his physical condition this rough, hard work was far from wise, but the influence of seeing the Sultan carrying heavy stones on his own royal shoulders worked wonders with the populace. Rich and poor, strong and weak, young and old, followed his example, with the result that the scarcity of material where it was most needed was soon overcome, yet few could keep pace with the master.

A vision of Richard's men attacking the walls must have been ever before his eyes, driving him on, for his exertions were almost superhuman. Out of his tent at dawn, he toiled continuously until midday, when he returned to eat and to rest while the burning sun made heavy work out of doors dangerous. At four he was at it again and kept on until darkness made it impossible to continue.

Taxing days for one who should have been in his

bed and under the care of physicians and nurses at this time, but even then he was not content. While his co-laborers in the camp were relaxed in enjoyment of well-earned leisure after the evening meal, and even later on, when they were gone to their beds, the Sultan's lamp was still burning. Often until the small hours did this fact alone distinguish the royal tent from all others. The next day's work had to be laid out in detail before he could seek his pillow.

When the work had finally been completed to his satisfaction, he left Jerusalem and returned to the army. During his absence there had been a number of attacks upon foraging parties of the enemy and in one of these Richard had fallen into an ambush while hawking. Only by the heroic intervention of one of his men, who received the blow of the lance aimed at the monarch, had he escaped.

A new turn to the negotiations with el-Adel came in the form of approaches from the Marquess of Montferrat. That able knight had for some time been in a state of temper, because Richard had interfered with his ambitions. Much had happened since he had thwarted Saladin's attack on Tyre. The death of Queen Sibylla and her infant children a year earlier had again raised the hope of the Marquess that he might be chosen for the throne, and a considerable part of the Frankish knights were favorable to his pretensions, for Guy had never been popular. Conrad was far more their ideal, and his success at Tyre had greatly increased his prestige. His brother had been

the Queen's first husband, and he strengthened his claim by inducing Sibylla's younger sister, Isabella, to divorce Humphrey of Toron and marry him.

It was all part of the general ill will between the English and the French, which had been marked from the moment Philip and Richard had set sail for the Holy Land. The two had come near to open rupture many times, and Richard had caught Philip in an effort to induce Tancred of Sicily to attack him, promising his aid if he did so. Then Richard had not only refused to marry Philip's sister, to whom he had been betrothed in childhood, but had insulted her grossly to boot. It was not the impetuous Richard's tact which had prevented a bloody issue. All through the siege of Acre, too, there had been disagreements. Then it was Philip's cousin who had married Isabella to the Marquess, while the English Bishop of Salisbury had opposed her divorce. Finally Philip sailed back to France, disregarding Richard's protests, but the French who remained had inherited the quarrel of their master. A truce between Conrad and Richard provided that Guy should retain the kingship, but was to divide the royal revenues with the Marquess, who was to be lord of Tyre, Sidon and Beirut, while the crown was to go to the children of the new marriage after Guy's death.

Evidently the Marquess was still dissatisfied, for he now suggested peace to the Moslems, he to receive the cities of Beirut and Sidon, whereupon he would attack Acre and return it to the Sultan. The latter

agreed. Nothing suited him better than to see an open breach between Richard and the Marquess, "a man to be greatly feared." His only condition was that the attack on Acre, with the consequent release of the Moslems still held prisoners there, and the release of Moslem prisoners at Tyre, should precede the surrender to Conrad of Beirut and Sidon.

However, nothing came of these negotiations. Whether Richard learned of them or merely had a keen scent, he went to Acre before the Marquess could do anything and strengthened the garrison and defenses. At the same time he again took up negotiations with el-Adel, and this diplomat, like a juggler playing with two balls, seems to have kept them both in the air at the same time. Beha ed-din gives the following as the text of a letter sent by Richard, with the request that its contents be made known to Saladin:

"You are to greet him and say that both the Moslems and the Franks are reduced to the last extremity. Their cities are destroyed, and the resources of both sides in men and stores brought to nought. And since right has been done in this matter, we need speak only of Jerusalem, of the Cross and of the land in question. As to Jerusalem, we are fully resolved never to give it up, even though we had but one man left. Touching the land, you must restore it to us far as the other side of Jordan. And, lastly, as regards the Cross — to you it is nothing but a piece of wood, but it is very precious in our eyes, and if the Sultan will graciously give it

into our hands, we will make peace and breathe again after perpetual weariness."

To this the Sultan made the following reply: "Jerusalem belongs to us just as much as to you, and is more precious in our eyes than in yours, for it was the place of our Prophet's journey, and the place where the angels gathered. Therefore, do not imagine that we shall give the city up to you, or that we shall suffer ourselves to be persuaded in the matter. As regards the land, it belonged originally to us, and you came to attack us. If you succeeded in getting possession of it, it was only because you came unexpectedly and on account of the weakness of the Moslems who then held it. As long as the war lasts God will not suffer you to raise one single stone upon another in this country. Lastly, as concerns the Cross, its possession is a great advantage to us, and we cannot give it up except we could thereby gain some great advantage to Islam."

Some time after this Richard made the remarkable suggestion that peace could be arrived at through the marriage of his sister Joan, widow of the King of Sicily, to el-Adel.

CHAPTER TWENTY–TWO

COMING TO TERMS

RICHARD is remembered as one of the great kings of England, as a brilliant soldier, as a daring adventurer, and even his verse has been thought not unworthy. He was evidently also a man of wit, of a certain character. That he was so regarded by his contemporaries and those who lived not too long after to have lost touch with the reputation he had gained in this respect is evidenced by the poem of the Fourteenth Century describing the jolly trick he played upon Saladin's ambassadors after the fall of Acre. According to this Richard had demanded some pork while ill and, there being none obtainable in this Mohammedan country, his chef, at his wit's end, had conceived the brilliant idea of having a Moslem prisoner decapitated and preparing his head with many sauces in the semblance of a pig's head. This came to the King's knowledge later on and he thought it so good an idea he determined to repeat it for the benefit of the ambassadors.

As these were negotiating for the release of certain eminent emirs, Richard thought it particularly appropriate to have the heads of the latter served at the

banquet at which he was entertaining the Sultan's emissaries, and, to avoid the possibility of mistake, he had a label bearing the name of each emir served with his head. As his guests looked horror-stricken upon the awful mess, he pretended to be distressed at not having understood their taste in the matter of food better, and had other and more agreeable dishes served thereafter.

Of course, the poem was just an invention, based on the act of an earlier Crusader, who had a number of Moslems roasted and their bodies left lying behind his line of march, in order to spread the idea that his men were cannibals, and thus scare the enemy, who had been killing stragglers. But there can be no manner of question that Richard was thought to possess a sense of humor which rarely brought a smile from its victim.

It must have been in a spirit of raillery that he addressed this proposal of marriage between Joan and el-Adel to the Sultan; and the latter, at least, seems to have so understood it. Yet it was put forth in all solemnity, with considered details. The couple were to live in Jerusalem, which was to belong to them, together with the important cities of the coast — Acre, Jaffa and their dependencies, to be granted them by Richard, and also those places belonging to the Sultan. El-Adel was to be proclaimed King of all of these. He was also to retain all the fiefs and cities he then held. The Templars and Hospitallers were to have all the villages and strongholds belonging to them. Both

sides were to release their prisoners, and the Franks were to get the Holy Cross, whereupon Richard would take ship and sail for Merry England.

El-Adel summoned the Cadi and authorized him to act as spokesman of the embassy he sent to the Sultan to present the King's proposal. If the Sultan assented all present were to take solemn note of that fact. If he refused the terms that also was to be recorded by all of them.

The Sultan listened attentively and then gave his formal approval. At the Cadi's request, he made this unequivocal, saying "Yes" three several times, and called all who were present to witness his promise, "for he knew very well that the King of England would not carry them out and that it was nothing but trickery and mocking on his part."

El-Adel evidently was not so certain. He and the King had become quite friendly, and the former had taken to calling the prince by the affectionate title of brother. Richard had entertained him sumptuously at different times, and he had showered many gifts upon Richard. But he was soon to be undeceived. To the emir sent to convey the Sultan's reply Richard said Joan was unwilling to marry a Moslem, and had been greatly enraged at the suggestion. So he proposed that el-Adel become a Christian, a simple way of removing the only obstacle.

In the meantime each side was busy inflicting what damage it could upon the other. The Moslem fleet captured two ships, one carrying five hundred men,

most of whom were killed. "This news," wrote the Cadi, "gave us the greatest pleasure, and was proclaimed to the sound of music." A too rash charge by the Sultan's bodyguard and some new recruits was severely punished by a body of Franks outside Jaffa, and only those escaped who "were borne out of danger by their horses, or who were predestined to save their lives by the swiftness of their own limbs." The death of Taki ed-din was another fearful blow to the Sultan.

Now negotiations were again taken up with the Marquess, and this time he was represented by that same Lord of Sidon who had annoyed the Sultan so greatly by his devious methods. Now he was received with great *éclat,* his tent being furnished with carpets and cushions "fit for kings and great men." More than ever the Sultan was mindful of the advantage to be gained from keeping Richard and Conrad apart. An interview followed in which the Sultan expressed his readiness to come to terms with the Marquess, provided he would actually attack the forces of Richard.

Following closely upon this el-Adel and Richard had one of their love feasts. The former had set up his tent with the advance guard, and had brought with him all sorts of dainties and delicacies, various kinds of drinks, and beautiful gifts and presents, "fit for one prince to offer to another. When he made presents of this kind no one could outdo him in magnificence." The King was received with all due honors, and there-

after invited el-Adel to his quarters. The chefs of the two were in rivalry that day, for the King had provided a repast consisting of dishes peculiar to his country which he thought would appeal to el-Adel's palate. It appears to have taken all day for them to discuss each other's cuisine and make the appropriate comments, but they found time in between to refer to the unfortunate state of war, with the result that Humphrey of Toron again came to the Sultan with an embassy and a message from Richard. " I like your sincerity and desire your friendship," wrote the King, and went on to say he believed a satisfactory arrangement could be arrived at, which would acquit el-Adel of all blame from the Moslems, and bring no reproach to him from the Franks. Only the latter must have part of Jerusalem.

Saladin assented readily, but when the deputation had gone, he let the Cadi see that for once he had not been sincere. In fact, pretending to have overlooked the subject, he sent after Humphrey to raise the question of the status of the prisoners under these terms, his only purpose being to prevent a peace from being consummated. Evidently, his depression no longer ruled him, and he foresaw danger in any arrangement with the enemy.

" If we make peace with these people there is nothing to protect us against their treachery," he said. " If I were to die it might be difficult to get an army together such as this, and meanwhile the enemy would have waxed strong. The best thing to do is to perse-

vere in the Holy War until we have driven them all from the coast, or we ourselves die in the attempt."

Saladin held a council of his emirs and laid before them the propositions of King and Marquess. According to the Cadi, the King had again reverted to the idea of the marriage, in spite of the opposition of his nobles and the fair lady herself. As she was a widow he would have to secure the consent of the Pope, which might take six months. And if the Pope proved obdurate there was his brother's daughter, who was just as eligible as Joan, and here there would be no difficulty, for she was a virgin, and therefore entirely under his control.

The Sultan favored an arrangement with the Marquess, principally because that would divide the forces of the Franks, and get them to fighting each other. His emirs, however, thought it better to deal with the King, asserting that no reliance could be placed upon the promises of the Marquess or his allies among the Syrian Franks. They insisted, however, that the marriage should be with Joan. Curiously, no mention is made of this talk of marriage by the Christian chroniclers, while others beside the Cadi of the Moslem writers refer to it as the subject of protracted negotiations.

All this time hostilities went on as actively as ever, and if Richard was pleased to visit his " dear brother," he could not have taken so much pleasure in knowing that the Lord of Sidon was now also a frequent guest in the same camp. In fact, the astute ambassador of the Marquess was often in the company of el-Adel and

made no effort to disguise that fact. They could be seen riding out to a hill overlooking Richard's camp and surveying the latter, as though considering the forces at his disposal and consulting on plans to overcome them. Probably the crafty Knight believed this might affect Richard's obduracy in opposing the Marquess, while el-Adel felt equally convinced it would influence the King to acquiesce in the Sultan's conditions for peace.

The jockeying for advantage continued until the bad weather set in and the Sultan brought his forces to Jerusalem. The suggested substitution of the King's niece for his sister was definitely negatived by both the Sultan and his brother, but otherwise Richard's terms were declared acceptable. El-Adel, who was left behind to gather fresh contingents for the re-opening of the campaign in the spring, was charged with the continuation of the discussions with Richard, but manifestly nothing could be effectuated until the embassy to the Pope should return with his decision. In the meantime the Sultan dismissed the troops not under his direct control and spent the winter in the Holy City.

The following spring the bargaining became more involved than ever. There appeared to be a possibility that Richard and the Marquess might get together, after all, and the Sultan was greatly disturbed by an attitude of rebellion on the part of the son and heir of Taki ed-din. News of this came to Richard, who believed he saw the possibility of war among the Mos-

lems and dropped further bartering for peace. Finally the Sultan came to an arrangement with the Lord of Sidon. It looked as though Richard would find himself between two fires, but that danger disappeared with the assassination of the Marquess.

The killing was done by two emissaries of the Assassins, and the reason for their act was said to be Conrad's seizure of a ship belonging to the Old Man of the Mountains. For some unexplained reason the crime was charged to the Sultan, whose interests were certainly not favored by the disappearance of the Marquess at this time. A more plausible suggestion was that it had been inspired by Richard, who saw his efforts to win Conrad back frustrated by the agreement with the Sultan.

About this time Richard started for Jerusalem, as the Sultan had foreseen he would, but this confirmation of his fears lessened these not a whit. When a large caravan from Egypt fell into Richard's hands, with many prisoners and a booty of several thousand camels, many horses and rich supplies, the situation was greatly aggravated. Not only was the capture of Jerusalem possible, but the transport to Egypt, always an ambition of Richard's, was now supplied by his opponents.

Ill, and overwhelmed with anxiety, Saladin wavered in a manner quite unlike his former self. Should he stay in Jerusalem and expose himself and his army to the danger of capture, which would mean the end of Moslem resistance to Christian aggression?

Should he put everything to the test and meet the enemy before the walls of the Holy City in one final battle? These were the questions he asked himself, and put to the council of emirs. These, with the appearance of finality, agreed it would be better for him to go out with part of the forces and wait his opportunity, while they remained with the rest and put up the best resistance they could. But Saladin knew his people and was not deceived. Their assurance of loyalty had sounded well. Seif ed-din el-Meshtub, as their spokesman, had delivered himself in ringing tones of these words:

"My lord, we are your servants and slaves. You have been gracious to us and made us great and mighty and rich. We have nothing but our necks and they are in your hands. By God! not one among us will turn back from helping you till we die." And there had been wild applause from all present, which seemed to reassure him and bring solace to his mind. But, in the solitude of his tent that night, he let the Cadi see how far he was from accepting the vows of these henchmen.

Abu el-Heija, surnamed the Fat, because he could barely waddle and had to have a seat where others stood, was the first to confirm his doubts. Many of the Sultan's mamelukes, he said, had come to him to criticize the decision and to say they were against remaining in the city, but preferred a stand against the enemy outside. Then a message was received by Saladin in which he was informed it would not do for him to go away and leave the defense of the city to others,

for the Kurds would not give heed to the Turks nor the latter to the Kurds. So everything was in the cauldron again.

Fortunately for the Moslem cause the same discord which possessed them was also present in the councils of the Franks. These had now advanced to within sight of the city, and there was no apparent reason why they should not come in. The pious Cadi laid their abrupt turn about to the influence of the Friday prayers, and more especially to those which the Sultan spoke beneath his breath so that none should overhear, while the tears ran through his beard and moistened the carpet upon which he knelt.

More commonplace reasons appear in the arguments of Richard himself, supported by the Syrian Franks generally and by the Hospitallers and Templars, who argued that what with the inclement weather ruining their food and rusting their armor, with the water supplies for a besieging army polluted by the enemy, with the known disposition of the knights and soldiers to leave for home as soon as they should have taken the city — if, indeed, they should be so fortunate — it would be folly to go on. Much better take Ascalon and Damascus and then go on to Egypt, when they would have all the Moslems at their mercy.

Against this had been great clamor on the part of the French, who insisted they had come to rescue the Holy City and cried shame on those who would abandon the chief purpose of their coming. With hopelessly

divided councils the decision was finally left to a council of five Frenchmen, five Hospitallers, five Templars and five Syrian nobles. That decision was to go to Egypt, and the next day the Moslems watching from the towers of Jerusalem saw the enemy hosts on their way back to Ramleh.

Both sides were now sufficiently weary of the war to be ready to come to agreement, even though the Sultan had not changed his views as to the danger of peace with so uncertain an enemy, but the dickering had to go on for some time yet. Henry of Champagne had succeeded to the throne made vacant by the death of the Marquess of Montferrat, and it was from Henry that the next ambassador came to the Sultan. He brought demands so absurd the Sultan could hardly refrain from venting his anger on him.

Then came an ingratiating note from Richard, asking indulgence for the King, and indicating a strong wish for a friendly solution of the differences between them. Again the Sultan replied with his wonted courtesy, and once more messengers went to and fro, with the indications of agreement improving, but this time they foundered upon the stones of Ascalon. Richard was unwilling to see these, which he and his knights had rebuilt partly with their own hands, demolished again, and Saladin knew too well the danger of leaving this fortified city in enemy hands to consent to its remaining intact.

With negotiations broken again each side was on the alert for a new opportunity to take the offensive.

Richard planned an assault upon Beirut and Saladin swooped down upon Jaffa. He had taken the city and was promised the surrender of the citadel, to which the soldiers had retreated, largely upon the suggestion of the Moslem commander, who did not want to see them massacred, yet found it difficult to restrain his men, when Richard arrived in his ships from Acre. Undoubtedly there was a mix-up on the part of the Moslems. The Turks and Kurds, bent on making the most in the way of looting of this first important victory in a long time, interfered with the arrangements made by the Sultan, which assured the besieged the same terms he had made at the capture of Jerusalem. To make this possible it was necessary to prevent the Moslems from going on with their looting, and the mamelukes of the Sultan had to use force in some instances to accomplish this, a circumstance which was to have unpleasant results for the Sultan.

In the end the Moslems lost the day. The Cadi, who was in the midst of the fighting, acting as the Sultan's messenger to the garrison, forgot all partisanship in describing what occurred. His picture of the fighting of the Franks is a glorification of their steadfastness, their heroism and their alertness, as it is a tribute to the fighting qualities and leadership of Richard.

As the walls go down under the onslaught of the Moslem mangonels the Christian soldiers fill the breach with a menacing, unwavering line of lances. A stone from the mangonels sends a soldier down from the rampart. Immediately another steps into his place

to meet the same fate. A third leaps from the citadel to the strand, a great height, and plunges into the sea to bring to Richard the news the citadel has not yielded and only waits his succor. "What fine soldiers they were!" exclaims the Cadi, "how brave and courageous!" And Richard's galley is the first to reach the shore. At the head of his men, his great sword in action with the usual dire results to the enemy, he drives the Moslems before him, they only too glad to escape with their lives.

He was in a sportive humor when the chamberlain of el-Adel came to him at his invitation the next day.

"This Sultan is mighty, and there is none greater or mightier than him in this land of Islam. Why, then, did he make off at my first appearance? By God! I was not even armed or ready to fight. I am still wearing only the shoes I wore on board."

The truth was the Sultan knew nothing of his arrival until after he had relieved the city, and was negotiating for the surrender of the citadel with two envoys when the Cadi brought him the news.

"Great and good God!" Richard went on, "I should have thought he could not take Jaffa in two months and yet he made himself master of it in two days."

However, his purpose in summoning the chamberlain was not to comment but to renew requests for peace. The bone of contention still remained the same, and Richard, crafty as ever, now suggested that the troops he would leave in Jaffa and Ascalon would ever

SALADIN AND RICHARD

The Legendary Combat Between the Two Heroes of the Crusade

(From a Painting by Abraham Cooper)

be at the service of the Sultan. Of course, the bait was not accepted. The Sultan would grant the possession of Jaffa but not of Ascalon. Back came the King's envoy to say if the Sultan would only concede Ascalon peace could be made in six days and the King would not have to spend another winter in Syria. To which Saladin replied that in any case Richard would have to remain for, with his departure, all he had conquered would be retaken.

"If he can manage to spend the winter here," the message continued, "far from his people and two months' journey from his native land, whilst he is still in the vigor of his youth and at an age that is usually devoted to pleasure, how much easier it is for me to remain here not only during the winter, but during the summer also? I am in the heart of my own country, surrounded by my household and my children, and able to get all I want. Moreover, I am an old man now, I have no longer any desire for the pleasures of this world. I have had my fill of them and have renounced them forever. The soldiers who serve me in the winter are succeeded by others in the summer. And, above all, I believe that I am furthering God's cause in acting as I do. I will not cease therefrom until God grants victory to whom He will."

It was a few days later that the Sultan surprised Richard with a small force of men outside Jaffa. The infantry was under a thousand, the knights barely a dozen. But Richard was there and the inspiration of his presence made up for numbers. Perhaps, of even

greater influence was the indisposition of the Moslems to fight. It seemed a wonderful opportunity to bag Richard and all his men, but in vain did the Sultan go from squadron to squadron offering liberal rewards to those who would charge the comparative handful of Franks. Only his son, ez-Zaher, responded, and he, being alone, was restrained by the Sultan. The explanation lay in the remark of el-Jenah, one of the Kurdish emirs, referred to earlier in this recital.

" O Salah ed-din," said he, " order your mamelukes who yesterday took the booty and beat the soldiers with blows of massue to go ahead and fight. When it is necessary to fight it is our turn, but if it is a question of booty it is they who receive it."

Naturally, Saladin was greatly chagrined, and his hurt was not minimized by the fact that Richard, as if emboldened by a perception of what was happening, was riding tauntingly, lance in hand, the whole length of the army, with never a Moslem to accept his challenge. Never did he stand out more picturesquely nor more truly earn his right to be called the Lion-Hearted.

Saladin left the field in hot anger. How he had conquered his feelings and invited the sulking emirs to partake of his fruit in camp that night has already been told. " He was a man kind and generous and much given to pardon when he had the power to take vengeance," wrote Imad ed-din.

Richard was finally constrained to make peace. News from England was too disturbing to permit him

to remain away longer, and he doubtless was convinced he could not overcome the Moslems so long as Saladin commanded them. The terms accorded with what Saladin had agreed to, and the claim to Ascalon was abandoned. Richard sailed October 9, 1192 without having met Saladin, but left a message that he would return after three years, the term for which the peace was made, and conquer the Holy Land. To which Saladin, never lacking the right word of courtesy, replied that if he must lose it he knew of no one to whom he would rather lose it than to the English King.

CHAPTER TWENTY–THREE

DEATH OF SALADIN

SALADIN was twenty-seven when he accompanied his uncle on the first expedition to Egypt. He was fifty-five when the peace pact with Richard ended his military career. Twenty-eight years of hard fighting — not continuous, but with no long gaps between — was the price he had to pay for restoring to a united Islam the supremacy of the Holy Land.

Balian of Ibelin, who was present when the treaty of peace was signed, paid an unconscious tribute to the ability shown by Saladin as champion of Islam when he said:

"Know that nobody among the Moslems has done such evil as thou to Christianity. Never in my time have so many Franks perished as now. We have counted the warriors who embarked to come and find thee, and they numbered six hundred thousand. Of each ten no more than one has returned to his country."

But the victory had been costly. It left Saladin broken in health, weary and worn.

His return to Damascus inspired a great demonstration of enthusiasm and a spontaneous outburst of

affection on the part of the populace. He was hailed everywhere as the savior of his people, as the national hero and the symbol of Moslem ascendency over the Frank. But he was still unconvinced of the wisdom of the peace. Even when he was about to sign the pact he said to the Cadi:

"The enemy will increase their forces, and then they will come out of the lands we are leaving in their possession, and recapture those we have taken from them. You will see that each one of them will make a fortress on some hill top. I cannot draw back, but the Moslems will be destroyed by this agreement."

Nevertheless, he went even beyond his word in observing all its terms. Richard had been annoyed at the number of pilgrims and had asked the Sultan to put hindrances in the way of their visiting Jerusalem, but the latter leaned the other way. Not only were the gates of the Holy City opened to them but he provided guards to ensure their safety on the way. He gave "honorable entertainment to such as he chose. He received them at table, and entered into familiar conversation with them." To Richard he wrote: "There are men here who have come from afar to visit the holy places and our law forbids us to hinder them."

There was a family gathering for a time in Damascus, the city Saladin had come to prefer above all others. El-Afdal and ez-Zaher, who appears to have been his father's favorite, he who was the babe the Sultan had carried through part of the war, came there first

and later el-Adel. It must have been quite a household, for there were seventeen sons and a small daughter living. The Sultan and el-Adel relaxed for a time, enjoying the pleasures of the hunt, and playing polo, of which the former was extremely fond. He looked upon this as a brief interlude before he took up the many projects he had in mind.

One of these was a pilgrimage to Mecca. Another was a revisiting of Egypt and the putting into effect there of plans he had in mind for that country. Finally there were larger designs for extending the consolidation of the Moslems under the Sultanate.

Ibn el-Athir relates a conversation in which the Sultan, el-Adel and el-Afdal took part. El-Adel suggested an armed advance to Khelat, the Prince of which had failed to carry out his promises to the Sultan. El-Afdal preferred an advance into the territory of the heirs of Kilidj Arslan, which had frequently been an aid to the enemy. The Sultan said he would do the latter but el-Adel could at the same time take measures against Khelat. Later they would unite and pass on into Persia. In the meantime, while he was finishing matters which needed attention at home, he gave el-Adel authority to go to Kerak and put its affairs into shape.

But all these projects were but mere mutterings. A greater and more powerful enemy than any they had in mind must first be conquered and no one seemed clever enough to do this. The illness which had interfered with his purposes for the past two years

resisted all the physicians. None of them seemed to understand it, or how to treat it.

Yet even now he would not spare himself. Justice must be administered and petitions considered. To satisfy the universal desire to see him he held public receptions, to which everybody was admitted. Poets came and sang the praise of him who "spread the wings of justice over all, and rained down boons on his people from the clouds of his munificence." Not a wise performance for one suffering from indigestion, lassitude and weakness.

With the passing of the winter his condition had become so much worse he could no longer receive visitors. The Cadi, one of the few privileged friends, found he no longer had the buoyant spirits which had seemed a part of his nature. His appetite was gone and he moved with difficulty. Yet his old will was still working and he insisted upon going out to meet a caravan of pilgrims bound for Mecca. This was near the close of February and the weather was cold and wet. Yet, through some carelessness he had not been provided with the quilted tunic he was wont to wear. Apparently, he was not aware of this until the Cadi, ever watchful, asked him the cause of its absence. It could not be found and the crowd, which had streamed out joyously to look upon him, impeded his return to the palace. The Cadi apprehensive of evil forced a way through the gardens, and brought him home. It was his last contact with the outside world. After a lingering, painful struggle, he died on March 4, 1193.

The whole of Damascus was in tears, and many were so stunned they could not remember the formal prayers but could only exclaim. When his death was announced all doors were shut and the streets remained deserted. "No one," wrote one chronicler, "thought to pillage the city."

The funeral was of the simplest character. The poets could no longer sing and there was neither dirge nor funeral oration. A single striped cloth covered the coffin, in which was placed the sword he had carried throughout the war. There is a legend that when he was dying he summoned his standard bearer and said to him:

"Do thou, who art wont to bear my banner in the wars, also carry the banner of my death. Let it be a vile rag, which thou must bear through all Damascus set upon a lance, crying: 'Lo, at his death the King of the East could take nothing with him save this cloth only.'"

There was no money left in the palace. "We were obliged to borrow money to purchase everything necessary for the funeral," wrote the Cadi, "even down to things that cost but a halfpenny, such as the straw to be mixed with the clay (to make the bricks with which the tombs of all persons of position were lined)." Two years later el-Afdal built a chapel on the north side of the Mosque and had the body interred there. There it is now, with this inscription over the entrance composed by the vizier, the Cadi el-Fadel:

"O God, accept this soul, and open to him the gates of Heaven, that last victory for which he hoped."

Nothing more characteristic of Saladin has survived to our day than these words spoken to ez-Zaher when the latter came to say farewell to his father at Jerusalem after the war, before setting out for the province of which he had been appointed ruler:

"I commend you to God Almighty, the source of all good. Do the will of God, for that is the way of peace. Beware of bloodshed; trust not in that, for blood never sleeps. Seek to gain the hearts of thy subjects, and watch over all their interests, for thou art only appointed by God and by me to look after their good. Endeavor to satisfy thy emirs, thy ministers and thy nobles. It is by gentleness and kindness that I have arrived at my present power. Never nourish ill feeling against any man, for death spares none."

APPENDIX

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R O U M
LESSER ARMENIA
R. Sarus
Marash
R. Pyramus
Behesn
Raban
Massisa
Tarsus
Ayn Tab
Azax
Bira
Harim
Antioch
Aleppo
CYPRUS
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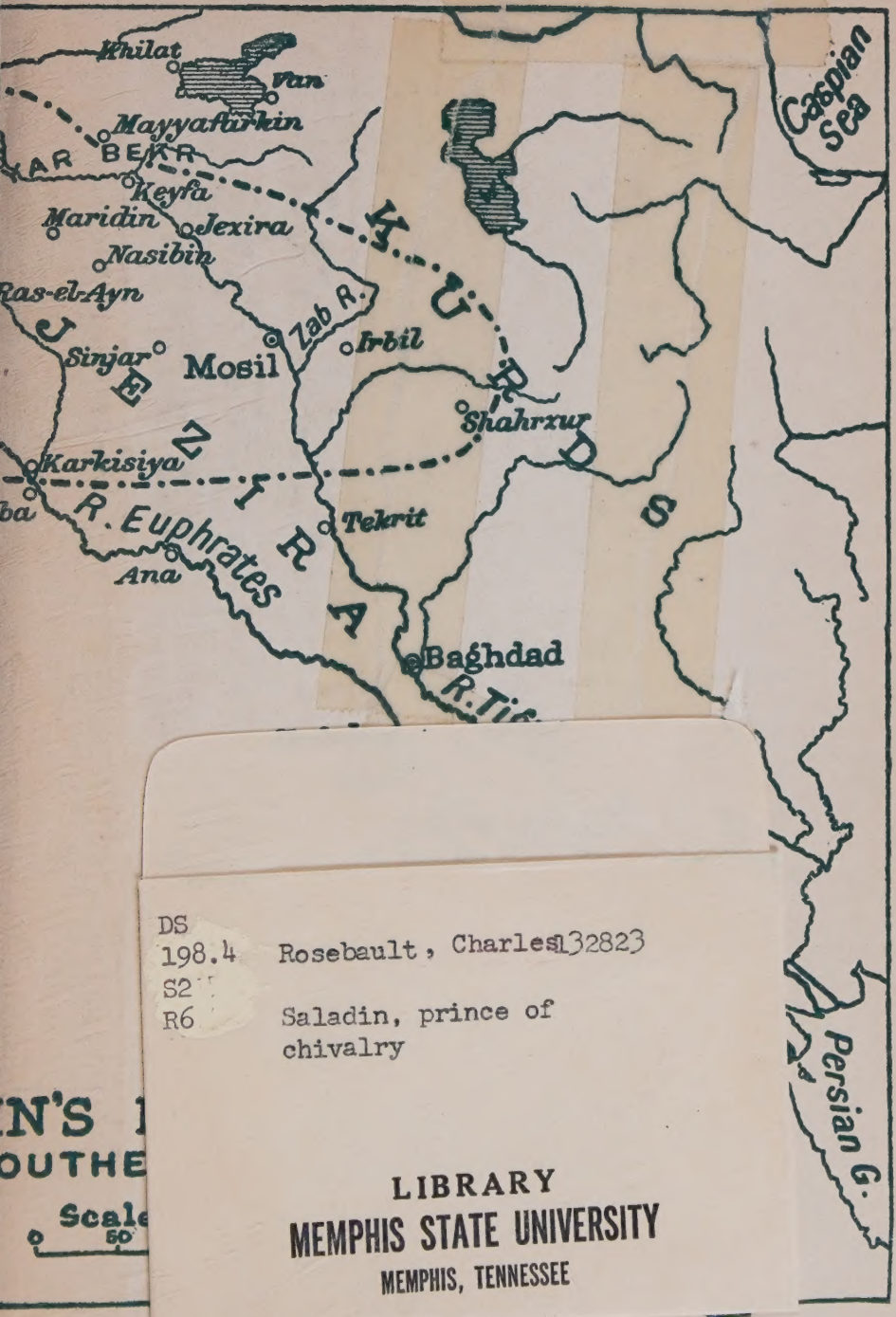

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